THE PRESENT STATE OF THE BRITISH INTEREST IN INDIA:

WITH A PLAN FOR ESTABLISHING A REGULAR SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT IN THAT COUNTRY.

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THE

THE
PRESENT STATE
OF THE
BRITISH INTEREST
IN
INDIA, &c.

NO nation nor ſtate ever acquired an acceſſion of dominion ſo truly valuable and beneficial, as are the acquiſitions lately made by Britain in India. But the particular ſituation of her circumſtances at the time when theſe acquiſitions fell into her hands, enhanced the real and intrinſic value of them to Britain. Oppreſſed by a grievous debt, the annual intereſt of which, exceeding four millions and a half ſterling, was levied by taxes, which raiſed the price of each manufacture, her commerce labouring under ſuch diſadvantages was daily ſinking into decay; whilſt a conſiderable part of this annual intereſt being paid to foreigners, created ſuch a drain of ſpecie, as the balance of her trade could not ſupply; ſo that, in proportion as her expence increaſed, the means of defraying it diminiſhed; and ſhe was eve-

ry year approaching towards a ſtate of national poverty and bankruptcy.

In ſuch circumſtances did Britain acquire the ſovereign dominion of Bengal, and of other rich manufacturing and trading countries in India; which, at the time they fell to her, were capable of not only defraying every charge of their own government and defence, but over and above that, of yielding annually to the ſovereign a ſum equal to 1,300,000 l. ſterling, as can be readily demonſtrated. Nor do we include in this ſum the benefit which Britain had been accuſtomed to receive, in her commercial capacity, by her trade with thoſe countries: the ſum here ſpecified would have ariſen purely in conſequence of dominion: and, whether tranſmitted from thoſe countries in merchandize or in money, would at laſt have arrived at the public treaſury in ſpecie: and would thus have ſerved to alleviate the burden of thoſe taxes, that are preſſing every branch of her domeſtic commerce to ruin. And, if Britain had beſtowed the ſmalleſt attention on the political government of thoſe countries, ſhe might have continued to draw from them the above-

abovementioned tribute ſum *in perpetuum*, without any danger of draining or impoveriſhing them: nay it is certain, that under a juſt, equitable and well ordered government, their commerce and agriculture might have been extended to a degree, that would have enabled them to afford a ſtill larger annual tribute to the ſovereign. The poſſeſſion of this Indian dominion is likewiſe ſo particularly ſecured from domeſtic and foreign danger, by the extraordinary ſubmiſſive diſpoſition of the natives, the ſingularly defenſible ſituation of the country, and the naval ſuperiority of Britain, that, by a very trifling expence of men, and no pecuniary charge, ſhe might have maintained it againſt all enemies. So that Britain might have derived from this dependent dominion reſources ſufficient to relieve her from all her difficulties and diſtreſſes.

This is what Britain might have done: and this was not ſimply poſſible, it was eaſy of execution. But if we enquire what Britain hath done, we ſhall find that, inſtead of applying theſe reſources by a proper care and attention to the purpoſe, for which it would ſeem the all-wiſe diſ-

penſation of Providence had at this critical conjuncture beſtowed them upon her, ſhe hath indolently and deſperately thrown them from her, and left them to the will of blind chance. For ſurely it may with propriety be ſaid, that the government of Britain conſigned all theſe reſources to the guidance of blind chance, or rather to certain deſtruction, when it ſcrupulouſly withheld its own care, and implicitly confided the ſovereign charge of governing and defending this foreign dominion to a Company of Merchants, ſo evidently unequal to ſuch a charge, that, inſtead of being ſurprized that theſe countries ſhould now at laſt be impoveriſhed and ruined, we have reaſon to be aſtoniſhed, that they have ſupported, for ſuch a length of time, the complicated evils of tyranny and anarchy.

The conſequences of committing this ſovereign charge to the Company have been long foreſeen, and likewiſe foretold, by ſome who were acquainted with the nature of their government: but the power and influence of thoſe who were ſharing amongſt them the plunder of thoſe wretched countries, blaſted the credit of their

their repreſentations: until at laſt, the effects being felt at home, it hath become impoſſible to totally ſuppreſs the truth. Nay even now, that theſe men are forced to partly acknowledge the ruinous ſituation of this foreign dominion, yet have they ſtill the aſſurance to miſlead the public judgment, by repreſenting the Company as the only party concerned in the conſequence: though it is certain, that this Indian concern, which hath been leaſed or farmed out by Government to the Company, is of the very higheſt importance to the public intereſt; as having been for many years the principal ſupport of national opulence and credit, as well as of commerce and revenue. For, in the article of opulence, the private fortunes acquired in thoſe countries by the ſervants of the Company, ever ſince the time that their power prevailed over the native government, that is ever ſince 1757, hath created an annual influx of ſpecie to Britain of about 700,000 l. and the dedomagement paid to Government by the Company, ſince the aſſumption of the dewanny in 1765, is a farther influx of

400,000 l.

400,000 l. the drawback on teas is reckoned about 200,000 l. and the Company hath increaſed her dividend ſince the laſt mentioned period 200,000 l. though only one half of this laſt ſum may be reckoned to remain in the country, the other half being paid to foreign proprietors. Theſe four ſums, making together 1,400,000 l. have been yearly drawn from India in conſequence of dominion: and, whether ſent from thence in merchandize, in bills, or in ſpecie, have produced ſo much money to Britain: and notwithſtanding the private fortunes have been acquired by means that have exhauſted theſe ſources of wealth, that might otherwiſe have flowed perpetually into Britain; and the dedomagement may be conſidered as a baſe compoſition, received for alienating the ſovereign rights of the Britiſh crown and nation, and for furniſhing a force to ſupport the moſt deteſtable tyranny of a few individuals over fifteen millions of men, who are to all intents and purpoſes Britiſh ſubjects; yet did the opportune importation of ſo much wealth, ſerve to ſupport the credit of the nation under the grievous accumulation of debt contracted in the laſt

war;

war; and to prevent her feeling the drain of ſpecie made by her foreign creditors, which otherwiſe would by this time have completely exhauſted her. By her commerce with thoſe countries, Britain hath exported yearly 5 or 600,000 l. worth of her own manufactures and merchandize, and for theſe ſhe received the commodities of India; which commodities, being re-exported, formed the moſt eſſential article of her traffic with Africa, on which her Weſt India colonies do entirely depend; they are likewiſe the moſt valuable article of her trade with America. And the duties levied by Government, on ſuch part of theſe Indian commodities as is expended at home, create a very conſiderable, and by far the moſt equitable and convenient branch of revenue.

But the value and importance of this Indian concern will appear in a ſtill ſtronger light, if we ſhall look forward to the conſequences that muſt naturally and unavoidably enſue to the public intereſt from the loſs of it. The firſt and moſt immediate of theſe conſequences will be national bankruptcy; or, which is the ſame thing, a ſtop to the payment of intereſt

tereſt on the national debt ; for a deprivation of that annual influx of ſpecie from India will quickly produce national poverty; and an incapacity of paying in ſpecie the intereſt of the foreign creditors. But the loſs of our Indian commerce will operate this effect ſtill more ſpeedily; for, on the ſuppoſition that the nation ſhall be deprived of this branch of commerce, it muſt neceſſarily follow, that Government will loſe that branch of revenue which ariſes from the home conſumption of Indian commodities; and it is plain, that Government cannot then continue to pay the uſual expence, without making good this deficiency of revenue by additional taxes on land, and the neceſſaries of life: but as this additional load, falling on our little remaining commerce, would by one year's experience be found inſupportable, Government would be forced to retrench its expence, in that only article that can be diſpenſed with, the payment of intereſt on the national debt; and when this happens, what advantage will the public creditor hold above the India proprietor? The only difference will be, that the latter will have felt his

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loſs a little earlier than the former. But national bankruptcy, though it may be the firſt, is not the only, nor even the greateſt, public damage, accruing from a deprivation of this Indian concern: loſs of future credit, of trade and navigation, and conſequently of naval power and defence, will ſoon follow; and, in this general calamity, every one individual of the community will come in for his ſhare, in proportion to his rank or ſituation.

Such are the conſequences that muſt enſue to the public intereſt from a deprivation of the benefit hitherto derived from this Indian concern: and if the nation is to ſuffer ſo grievouſly by the loſs of this object, can ſhe allow herſelf to be perſuaded, that ſhe hath no intereſt in its preſervation. Now this object ſtands in danger of being loſt to the nation by two different cauſes; the firſt being, the neglect or incapacity of the Company to maintain and defend it from the aſſault of enemies: and the other danger ariſes from the oppreſſion and miſconduct of this Company's political government; tending to deſpoil thoſe countries of their circulating ſpecie, their arts, manufactures, commerce, and inhabitants,

bitants, which were the only means that enabled them to afford this benefit to Britain. The firſt of theſe dangers is ſcarcely dreamt of, and yet it is perhaps immediately imminent; at preſent however we are treating of the danger to be apprehended from the political cauſe.

How far the intereſt of this foreign dominion hath been injured by the Company's political miſgovernment; or how near it may be reduced to a ſtate of utter inability to afford any farther benefit to Britain, is but little known by the public. For though people have heard in the groſs, that affairs in thoſe countries are rather in a bad ſituation, yet do not they either underſtand or believe it to be ſo very bad as it really is; or rather they do not comprehend how it ſhould be ſo bad; as not being acquainted with the full power of the cauſe that hath produced the evil; and every one will form his notion of effects that he neither feels nor ſees, from his knowledge or opinion of the nature and power of the cauſes that produced them. In the caſe before us, people have been taught to conſider the oppreſſion and extortion of its government, (of which certain

tain inſtances are quoted) as the ſole cauſe of evil to Bengal: of conſequence it is ſuppoſed that Bengal hath ſuffered no farther damage from its government, than what may have been cauſed by ſome private acts of extortion, exerciſed by the few perſons veſted with the powers of governing: and, beſides that the authenticity of theſe acts is denied or diſputed, and men who are to judge only from report are apt to make allowance for the prejudice or paſſion of the accuſer who brings a charge againſt individuals; ſtill if all theſe acts of oppreſſion that have been narrated ſhould be fully credited; nay, if the hearer ſhould ſuppoſe ſtill more than is repreſented, yet cannot he conceive or allow himſelf to believe that ſuch acts of extortion, exerciſed by a ſmall number of individuals, could ſuffice to reduce the lately rich commercial kingdom of Bengal to ſuch a deplorable ſtate of miſery, poverty, and diſtreſs: the cauſe aſſigned will appear too trivial for the effect; and of courſe the effect, at leaſt the degree of it, will be diſcredited.

But he who means to acquire a juſt notion of the preſent ſtate of thoſe countries,

and the extent of damage they have ſuſtained from their preſent Government, muſt fully inform himſelf of the true nature and condition of that Government, and the manner of its operation on the general intereſt of the people governed; he muſt learn, not only that which it hath done, but likewiſe that which it hath not done; for the intereſt of a community may ſuffer far more detriment from the non-action, than from the oppreſſion, of its government. To the end, therefore, that every one may be enabled to form a proper judgment on theſe matters, we mean to preſent a general view of the nature, and effects, of the Company's Government in Bengal.

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THE NATURE AND EFFECTS OF THE COMPANY'S GOVERNMENT IN BENGAL.

THE Engliſh Eaſt India company is, under the title of Dewan, the real and actual ſovereign of Bengal, Behar, and Orixa: a dominion equal to almoſt any one ſtate in Europe, in reſpect of either extent and fertility of country, or numbers of ingenious and induſtrious ſubjects; and exceeding moſt of them in the internal materials of commerce, or reſources of wealth. The Company executes the government of this dominion by a deputation, conſiſting of a Governor and Council; who reſide at Calcutta, the Company's original preſidency, or chief factory in Bengal. And the Directors, who, as poſſeſſing the executive authority of the Company, may be termed the ſupreme ſovereigns of this Indian dominion, have preſerved to themſelves the ſole power of immediately ordering, directing and controuling

trouling the government; for this deputed government communicates its purpoſes, receives its orders, and accounts for its conduct to none but the Directors.

But it is evident, that the diſtance of ſituation muſt render the immediate controul of the Directors perfectly impotent, ineffectual, and nugatory; for it would be abſurd to ſuppoſe, that the government of Bengal ſhould defer the execution of any one purpoſe until it ſhall have communicated with, and received the opinion of the Directors, which cannot be effected in the ſpace of a whole year; conſequently the directors cannot interfere in the direction, or ordering of this government, farther than in ſome few caſes of the moſt general or invariable nature: but the execution of even theſe general orders depends upon the will and diſcretion of the deputed government; ſeeing the Directors cannot, at that diſtance, enforce it themſelves: and the ſame cauſe puts it out of their power to prevent or reſtrain abuſe; ſo that they hold neither poſitive nor negative authority in the immediate execution of this government. And the condition or ſituation of theſe directorial ſovereigns

vereigns at home, renders their retroſpective controul equally impotent and ineffectual; for they have no power in themſelves to inflict other puniſhment on their deputies, for the moſt audacious diſobedience, or for maladminiſtration, than diſmiſſion from their ſervice; and this becomes no puniſhment, becauſe the delinquents are previouſly prepared for it, being ready to ſet out of their own accord with a princely fortune for the mother country; where they ſet the authority of the Directors at defiance; for there theſe ſovereigns of India are themſelves ſubjects, and cannot call their quondam miniſters to account, except in an ordinary court of juſtice; and the difficulty of obtaining evidence requiſite to convict in theſe courts; the dread of bringing to light, in the courſe of a legal proceſs, ſome abſtruſe myſteries of government; and the apprehenſion of danger ariſing to the intereſt of the preſent direction from a powerful combination at the next election, will ever deter the Directors from ſeriouſly proſecuting a lawſuit againſt their deputies, even in caſes of peculation from the ſovereign; but if it reſpects only the intereſt

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of the ſubject, they will be more apt to palliate and defend the offence. We muſt therefore perceive, that this deputed government acts perfectly independent of either the immediate controul, or future awe of the ſovereign: whilſt the ſovereign is compelled to blindly ſupport, with its whole power, the authority of this government; and, without choice, to enforce all its meaſures; ſeeing that to oppoſe the will of the deputy, is oppoſing the authority of the ſovereign.

And, as to the native ſubjects, the power of this deputed government over them is perfectly abſolute and complete. For the inhabitants of thoſe countries, being diſpoſed by nature or climate to paſſive obedience, and by long cuſtom habituated to deſpotic authority, and being farther impreſſed with a particular awe of Europeans, from a notion of their natural ſuperiority, implicitly ſubmit to the will of their preſent government, without once daring to either examine its right, diſpute its authority, or queſtion its conduct. The ſubject therefore holds not the ſmalleſt voice in the adminiſtration of government; the juriſdiction, the police, the finances,

finances, the military government and defence, are all incontroulably directed by the Company's deputation: and the entire intereſts of thoſe countries, the lives and property of the inhabitants, are ſubjected to its diſcretion, and depend on its will.

So that this deputation of the Company executes the government of Bengal with a power perfectly unlimited by any exterior controul; and if we conſider that it is at the ſame time foreign to the country governed, mutable, and of very ſhort duration, we ſhall find that it is equally unreſtrained by any internal check. It is therefore the moſt unlimited government on earth; or rather it is the only government that can, with propriety, be termed arbitrary and deſpotic.

For all other deputed governments are ſufficiently reſtrained by the authority of the ſovereign; and we have no idea of deſpotiſm, except in governments that are ſupreme or ſovereign. But the idea of actual deſpotiſm in a ſupreme government is merely imaginary; ſeeing that, in one and all of theſe governments, the power of governing is conditional, limited by

rule, and ſubjected to controul both external and internal. For it is evident, that, in all ſupreme governments, the power of governing, and the means that ſupport this power, muſt needs be derived from the people governed; and therefore cannot exiſt in deſpight of their conſent; and though, in ſome of theſe governments, the condition, upon which this power and theſe means are granted, is not ſpecially expreſſed, yet is it perfectly underſtood, and invariably enforced in all of them; inaſmuch as there are examples in each, of ſovereigns who have ſuffered the utmoſt puniſhment, for attempting to tranſgreſs the limits of this condition; nay, there is ſcarce one inſtance where the prince, thus tranſgreſſing, eſcaped the reſentment of the people; and examples of this nature are moſt frequent in theſe governments that are falſely termed deſpotic. Theſe examples muſt therefore convince all ſovereigns, that there is a power in the people, ſuperior to, and capable of controuling them; and the ſenſe of this muſt ever prove an effectual external controul on the conduct of a ſupreme government. But ſelf-intereſt,

that

that *primum* and *perpetuum mobile* of human action, which we may term an internal check, operates ſtill more forcibly, conſtantly, and immediately on the will of a ſupreme government; not ſimply reſtraining it from doing or permitting injury, but impelling it to promote the good of the people governed. For a government that is ſovereign, and perpetual (or *durante vita* and hereditary) cannot poſſibly ſeparate its own private intereſt from that of the community which it governs; being indeed itſelf a part of that community: and this is ſo evident, that no prince ever attempted to advance a diſtinct intereſt of his own, at the expence of the general weal, who was not a fool, before he became a tyrant. But a wiſe ſovereign conſiders his people as the channel through which alone he can receive ſubſtantial good or evil; and, acting upon this principle, he will, however abſolute and diſpoſed by nature to tyranny, abſtain from injuring the general intereſt, becauſe he is ſenſible that ſuch injury will recoil upon himſelf; and he will exert himſelf to promote the proſperity of his people, as the only means of advancing his own power,

grandeur, or wealth. So that a ſovereign prince, who underſtands his own real intereſt, though otherwiſe void of virtue, will ever ſtudy to govern well; nay, the private vices of ſuch a prince do often operate public good; a ſtriking inſtance of which we meet with in our Henry the Seventh; whoſe extreme and ſordid avarice was the ſource of Engliſh commerce and wealth; and his mean ſelf-love, and jealouſy of power, eſtabliſhed univerſal liberty.

But the nature of this Bengal government differs, in every circumſtance, from that of a ſupreme government; being deputed, foreign, mutable, and temporary, it is no way intereſted in the laſting proſperity of the community which it governs; on the contrary, this government holds an intereſt which is not only diſtinct from, but diametrically oppoſite to that of the ſubject. For theſe Governors return to Europe immediately on the expiration of their office, which ſeldom dures above three years, often leſs; therefore their ſole aim is to amaſs all the wealth they can, during the ſhort term of their power, in order to tranſport it along with their

perſons

perſons to their own country. But the wealth which a government amaſſes, muſt needs be extorted from the people governed; conſeqnently ſelf-intereſt leads this government to pillage and plunder the ſubject: and we have ſeen that it is not reſtrained, by any external controul, from advancing its own diſtinct intereſt at the expence of the community which it governs, ſeeing it is perfectly exempted from all awe of either the ſovereign or the ſubject; and it cannot be reſtrained by any internal check, becauſe it holds no concern in the laſting welfare of the people.

Such then is the ruling principle of this government: nor are the means which it employs to promote its own intereſt leſs extraordinary than is its power to enforce them. For this government, which arbitrarily directs the juriſdiction and police, together with the impoſition and collection of taxes, doth at ſame time act in the capacity of a merchant. And this commercial deſpotiſm, or deſpotic power lodged in the hands of a few foreign merchants, hath, in its nature and conſequences, proved infinitely more deſtructive to the intereſt of that commercial

country,

country, than all the operations of political tyranny have been: for from it ſprung theſe cruel monopolies, which ſtruck at the very root of manufacture, commerce, and even population.

To attempt deſcribing the particular methods which this government hath practiſed to promote its own intereſt at the expence of the people, in its double capacity, of an abſolute ſovereign and a deſpotic merchant, would be a tedious, invidious, and even an unprofitable undertaking; for it is almoſt impoſſible to properly delineate the conduct of a tyranny ſo various and irregular in its operations; and, to thoſe who are unacquainted with the modes, cuſtoms, and intereſts of the country in queſtion, the recital of a few particular inſtances would only ſerve to miſlead their judgment, and darken or diminiſh the truth. By attending to the general deſcription given of the nature views and intereſts of this government, we ſhall form a more complete and juſt notion of its conduct and deportment, than can be acquired from any disjointed account of particulars. Let us ſuppoſe a few foreigners ſent into a rich commercial

country,

country, with abſolute and unlimited power over the lives and property of the inhabitants; actuated by no other principle than that of acquiring riches, and ſtimulated thereto not only by avarice but ambition, or the deſire of excelling; unreſtrained by any ſpecies of preſent awe or future apprehenſion; but on the contrary, encouraged by precedent to expect in their own country, titles, dignity, reſpect, and conſequence, each in proportion to the ſum he imports; and whatever methods we can ſuppoſe would be practiſed by ſuch foreigners, to accompliſh their purpoſe, within a ſhort limited term, we may ſuppoſe to have been actually employed by this Bengal government. The enormous amount of numerous fortunes, imported by the perſons employed in this government, together with the rapidity of acquiſition, are circumſtances ſeen and known in this country; and theſe will thoroughly warrant our ſuppoſing, that the acquirers have availed themſelves to the utmoſt of their powers, as well as their opportunities. However, we ſhall err greatly in our eſtimate of the damage cauſed to thoſe countries, by their government's proſe-

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cuting its own diſtinct intereſt, if we ſhall confine the reckoning to only the loſs of ſo much ſpecie, as hath been extorted and exported by theſe foreigners: for this, though in itſelf a ruinous grievance, is merely trivial, when compared with the havoc and waſte committed on the manufacture, the commerce, agriculture, and population, by the methods employed to acquire theſe ſums. A herd of hogs, broke into a well dreſſed vineyard, will gorge their voracious maws; but that which they eat and devour doth not deſtroy the vineyard; it is their manner of eating, their rutting up, their tearing down, and trampling under foot.

Hitherto we have regarded this government in only one point of view: we have ſeen it acting for itſelf; but we have not ſeen the part it acts for the people, in its capacity of a ſovereign ruler, adminiſtring the government of a mighty ſtate in all its different offices or departments; and entruſted with the care of the whole and entire intereſts of a numerous commercial nation. But, in the diſcharge of this ſovereign truſt, we ſhall find the government of Bengal a mere *Vis inertiæ*, void

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of the two efficient principles of action, ability or power of acting, and will or inclination. For how can we expect to find the ability, of governing well, in the men employed by the Company to execute the government of thoſe countries? to attain the knowledge of any one ſcience or myſtery, demands an effort of the mind; but it is impoſſible for the brighteſt natural genius to arrive at even a moderate degree of ſkill in the art of governing, which, as it is the moſt elevated, ſo is it the moſt difficult, abſtruſe, various and complicated of all human ſciences, without long and intenſe application, ſtudy, and reflection; and, we may add, a ſeries of practice; and all theſe gradations to ſkill, in governing, are wanting to our Bengal governors. Their ſcholaſtic education extends no farther than to qualify them for merchants clerks; and, immediately on being taken from ſchool, they are diſpatched to India; where the manner of life is conſonant to the climate, voluptuous to a degree of diſſoluteneſs, vain, idle, diſſipated, and an enemy to ſtudy or reflection: the juvenile part of their life being ſpent in this manner, they ar-

rive at the charge of government with minds perfectly uninformed, and ſo very averſe to application, that they commit and implicitly confide the charge of their own private concerns to ſervants. If ſuch men ſhould poſſeſs the ſkill or addreſs of governing well, it muſt certainly be acquired inſtantaneouſly and ſupernaturally; infuſed into them by miracle, like the gift of ſpeech into the aſs of Balaam.

But the want of will or inclination is an obſtacle to their governing well, ſtill more prevalent than is the want of ability. Labour, fatigue, and difficulty are evils, to which the human mind is ſo naturally averſe, that, unleſs it is urged by ſome ſtrong impulſe of paſſion, ſuch as the fear of ſome ſuperior evil, or the hope and deſire of ſome mighty good, it will decline and evade them: what ſtimulum then can be ſufficiently powerful to urge the habitually indolent minds of our Bengal governors to encounter the difficulties, the labour, and fatigue attending a due diſcharge of the duties of government; which, of all human undertakings, is the moſt replete with theſe mental evils? Yet this government, which demands a ſtron-

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ger ſtimulum than any other government that ever yet exiſted, is in effect urged by no one motive or conſideration to diſcharge the duties of its office; for, as it holds no intereſt in the laſting welfare of the people governed, neither its hopes nor its fears are at all intereſted in the good or evil conſequences that may be cauſed by its own vigilance or neglect: being altogether ſuperior to the reſentment of the ſubject, and independent of the ſovereign's authority, it is not impelled, by the fear of immediate danger, nor the apprehenſion of future puniſhment: and as to the proſpect of glory, applauſe, or reſpect, which puſh the generous and ambitious mind to action, our governors aim to attain them, not by governing well, but by acquiring and bringing home a mighty fortune to their own country.

Men thus actuated, or rather unactuated, muſt, in the diſcharge of their ſovereign office, be perfectly torpid aud liſtleſs; the machine of political government ſtops in their hands, and ſtands ſtock ſtill: their minds being incapable of application, they withdraw themſelves as much as poſſible from attention, and leave the trouble

of governing to others, ſtill leſs qualified than themſelves; theſe inferior agents being choſen, not for their abilities or virtue, but for their fitneſs to ſerve the private purpoſe of the governors, otherwiſe by chance; but they give themſelves no trouble to inſpect the conduct of theſe agents, who in general are unprincipled miſcreants; on the contrary, they promiſcuouſly approve and ſupport every action; ſo that, wherever the power of this government acts, it is only to oppreſs; and all beſide is left to chance. However, the power of governing, or rather of oppreſſing, is not confined to the perſons veſted with the charge of government: the numerous ſervants whom this Company diſperſes over the face of the country, for the purpoſe of carrying on her trade, do each of them, in his own diſtrict, aſſume the authority of a deſpot; and communicates a like authority to all his ſervants and dependants, who, it muſt be allowed, are far more unrelenting than their maſters; and thus tyranny is extended into every corner; oppreſſion becomes general; and the oppreſſed are excluded from the very proſpect of redreſs; for, on appeal to the

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ſuperior, the plaintiff is ever remanded to the very oppreſſor, who puniſhes him for having dared to complain. And thus juſtice and protection are no where to be found; vice goes unpuniſhed, and innocence unſupported; therefore every man becomes a villain in his own defence; and faith, confidence, truth, and honeſty are baniſhed the land. In ſhort, it may with ſtrict propriety be ſaid by theſe wretched people, *Terras aſtræa reliquit*; and tyranny and anarchy have here ſet up their throne.

And to this inaction or non-exertion of the powers of government we are to impute the ruin of thoſe countries, rather than to the avarice or rapine of the perſons deputed by the Company to execute that government. For the power of governing being veſted in only a few, the extortion of theſe few might have been long ſupported by a rich commercial country, provided they had exerted themſelves to reſtrain and prevent all others from plundering and oppreſſing. The avarice, profuſion and bloody tyranny of even Nero, and Domitian, was felt by only a few of their ſubjects at Rome; every where elſe the empire flouriſhed; be-

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cauſe theſe imperial monopolizers of vice would ſuffer none in power to be wicked but themſelves; they narrowly inſpected the conduct of their governors and officers, and ſeverely puniſhed their injuſtice or oppreſſion. But where the government doth not only plunder itſelf, but ſuffers every one under it to plunder, that country muſt in time be completely ruined.

Now Bengal hath been ſubjected to a government of this nature for theſe fifteen years paſt; for though we commonly date the commencement of the Company's ſovereignty from the aſſumption of the Dewanny, (as it is termed,) yet hath this Company (at leaſt her deputies) poſſeſſed a really abſolute authority in thoſe countries ever ſince the battle of Plaſſey in 1757. That action rendered them maſters of Bengal; and it was equally within their power to aſſume the ſovereign government at that time, as afterwards in 1765; their own will was the only obſtacle: but notwithſtanding they beſtowed it on a native Nabob, yet did they retain an abſolute ſuperiority over him, and he governed in a ſtate of perfect ſubordination

tion to their authority; for he well knew and experienced, that the duration of his office, and even of his exiſtence, depended upon their will; conſequently this dependent native government could but little reſtrain the conduct of the Company's deputies, or protect the ſubject from their rapacity; and when they, in 1765, ſet aſide this native government, they only removed a ſcreen which they themſelves had ſet up, and till then preſerved for their own purpoſe.

How far theſe countries may have advanced towards the period of final ruin, under the fifteen or ſixteen years domination of ſuch a government, we ſhall not pretend to determine, becauſe the term *ruin* is variouſly underſtood. This much is certain, that the unbounded remittance of ſpecie made, for ſome years, by the Engliſh Company, for ſundry purpoſes as ſovereign; and for a much greater number of years, and in much larger ſums by the other European Companies, who received it from the ſervants of the Engliſh Company for bills on Europe, at a very low exchange, and employed it for every purpoſe in the other parts of India

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and China, hath compleatly drained Bengal of its wealth, and reduced it to a ſtate of the moſt abject poverty. And the grievous oppreſſion and rapine exerciſed by the Company's ſervants, and their numerous dependants; together with the moſt cruel monopolies uſurped by them over every ſpecies of merchandize, and even the neceſſaries of life, hath in a great meaſure ſuppreſſed commerce, and aboliſhed trade. Whilſt the inſatiable avarice and unreſtrained extortion of thoſe employed in the collection of taxes and revenue having ruined the farmer, the lands lay uncultivated and waſte; inſomuch that, not to mention the immenſe decreaſe of revenue, that naturally moſt fertile of all countries, Bengal, hath ſuffered a more ſevere famine than perhaps was ever heard of; it being reckoned that a fifth part of the inhabitants have died of want, and numbers have fled from ſtarving and oppreſſion.

But it is not difficult to determine how near the intereſt of Britain in thoſe countries hath approached to ruin: for Britain is to conſider them as ruined to her purpoſe, ſo ſoon as they ſhall become incapable of ſupporting a commerce beneficial

cial to her; and at ſame time of yielding her a conſideration, in the nature of tribute, equivalent to the expence of ſubjects which ſhe ſends out annually to maintain her dominion there. And that they are nearly, if not totally, ruined to her, in both theſe reſpects, we begin already to feel, in ſpite of all the art or influence uſed to conceal the truth.

For, in the article of tribute, we find that, inſtead of receiving ſuch a ſurplus of revenue as ſufficed, at the commencement of the Dewanny, to not only pay for the ſpecie part of the Company's inveſtment in Bengal itſelf, but to purchaſe her cargoes, and defray all her charges in the other parts of India, and in China, the government of Bengal was, two years ago, reduced to the neceſſity of borrowing near a million ſterling on bills, which have been tranſmitted and accepted by the Company: in like manner hath this government been obliged to borrow laſt year; though the bills have been prevented, by an arbitrary ſtroke of deceit, from appearing againſt them in Europe. Theſe borrowed ſums have all been expended in Bengal itſelf: and if we allow that the whole

hath been employed to pay for the Company's inveſtment, (though by the by the ſpecie part of the Company's inveſtment cannot, at leaſt it ought not, if ſhe exports the proper quantity of European commodities, exceed half a million,) it muſt even then be admitted, that the revenue of Bengal hath barely ſufficed to defray the ordinary expence of government. And, if ſo, from whence is the tribute of Bengal, (whether we term it dedomagement, drawback, or encreaſed dividend) to ariſe? not from the mighty cargoes imported; for they are purchaſed, not with ſurplus revenue, but with borrowed money, which muſt be repaid either in India or in Europe: and as to the profits on theſe cargoes, they will be more than eat up by the charges of freight, and a long reckoning of India intereſt at eight per cent. I am ſenſible, that this account is ſtrangely perplexed and embarraſſed by intricate calculations of ſtock in hand, annual importations, and future ſales, &c. but when diveſted of all theſe ſtudied intricacies it will ſtand ſimply thus—As is the clear ſurplus of revenue received in Bengal, ſo will be the amount of tribute

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received in Britain; the former will ever exactly balance the latter. But this ſurplus we find to have been, for the two paſt years, equal to nothing; and the amount of tribute received in Britain muſt amount to exactly as much; conſequently the dedomagement, drawback, and increaſed dividend for the two laſt years is ſtill *in Nubibus*; where the national part, conſiſting of the two firſt articles, is like to remain; unleſs it ſhall be paid out of the Company's capital ſtock, as the encreaſed dividend hath been. But this revenue, which for the two years paſt hath barely ſufficed to defray the expence of government, hath not been kept up even to that extent without the aid of violence: but violence itſelf muſt yield to neceſſity, and cannot extort that which doth not exiſt; moreover the Company had, in theſe two years, decreaſed her military expence, by diſbanding ſome thouſand ſipahis, and otherwiſe diminiſhing the charge of her remaining force; and the attack made by Shaw Allum in conjunction with the Mharrattors will, this year, compel her to re-augment her military expence in every reſpect; whilſt the predatory incurſions of theſe

Mharrhattors will prevent the collection of revenue; how then will ſhe ſupport the augmented charge of this year, with a revenue decreaſed by a variety of cauſes ſo much below the degree of laſt year? Another loan upon the ſtrength of the capital is the only reſource; but poſſibly borrowing may, for ſeveral reaſons, have become impracticable by this time; and it is certain that troops will not, nay cannot, ſerve without pay—Here is a bleſſed proſpect indeed.

But, leaving this to the proof of time, we perceive that, at any rate, we have loſt the proſpect of future tribute from Bengal, through the channel of the Company; we have not ſo much as the promiſe of dedomagement, drawback, or encreaſed dividend for this current year; and if we can truſt to our own reaſon, preferably to bankrupt promiſes, we may give it up for good and all. Nay, there is mighty reaſon to apprehend, that even the private fortunes will ſoon ceaſe to exiſt; and then Britain will ceaſe to receive the ſum of 1,400,000 l. ſterling, which for a number of years paſt hath been annually flowing in to her from India, in conſequence of domi-

dominion. And if ſhe could barely ſupport her burden, when aided by this influx, how will ſhe, when deprived of it, anſwer the annual drain of ſpecie made by her foreign creditors?

With reſpect to the preſent ſtate of our commerce with thoſe countries, it is not enquired, and therefore not known, whether the Company exports the ſtipulated ſum of Britiſh commodities or not; and it is ſtill leſs known, whether the ſmall quantity ſhe hath exported of late is diſpoſed of; or whether it remains in her warehouſes abroad, to ſwell up the account of her ſtock; thus much however reaſon tells us, that the inhabitants of Bengal, who cannot procure the neceſſaries of life, millions having died of want, can but little afford to purchaſe foreign fopperies or ſuperfluities. Nevertheleſs we have ſeen large cargoes of Indian manufactures imported this very year; but we are not to ſuppoſe, that theſe cargoes are the produce of willing induſtry; they are procured by force and compulſion; the artiſan being held to work under the diſcipline of taſk maſters, who deprive him of his labour before it is completed,

pleted, at a price that will not afford him the means of living. Of the many markets that for ages had taken off the manufactures of Bengal, Europe is now the only one remaining; and this one market cannot be ſupplied without the application of force. How long force might ſupply the place of willing induſtry, we ſhall not pretend to determine; but one year more will diſcover the united effects of want of artiſans, want of money, and Mharrattor incurſions.

And thus have we demonſtrated the nature and condition of this Bengal government, together with the evils it hath cauſed to the country governed, not from a recital of diſputed facts, but from principles univerſally underſtood and admitted. For every one, the leaſt acquainted with the Company's affairs, muſt know and will allow that the views, the intereſts, the powers and opportunities of her deputed government in Bengal are exactly ſuch as we have deſcribed them; and upon this one undiſputed *datum* we have built our whole demonſtration; the truth and juſtneſs of which every man is capable of trying and proving, by the touchſtone of his

his own reaſon. For reaſon, without the aid of circumſtantial proof, can judge whether the line of conduct which we have aſſigned to the government of Bengal, is fairly inferred and deduced from its evident and allowed principle of action: and common ſenſe, unaſſiſted by demonſtration, will point out the effects that ſuch conduct muſt operate on the intereſt of the country governed; and, if we farther advert to the length of time that this country hath been ſubjected to ſuch operation, we ſhall nearly gueſs at its preſent ſtate and condition.

And we doubt not, that what hath been ſaid will enable every one, who makes uſe of his own reaſon and reflection, to form a proper judgment for himſelf on certain points of this Eaſt India buſineſs, which have been moſt groſsly miſrepreſented. For he will thereby diſcover, that the object, for which the nation hath to apprehend at preſent, is not the "*credit* of the Company;" which, had ſhe been reſtrained within her natural ſphere, and her conduct properly inſpected by government, could never have been injured; or, if it had, the breach could (in ſuch caſe) have little

little more affected the general weal, than the failure of any large trading houſe; which, ſo long as the trade remained entire, would have been immediately replaced by another; but he will perceive, that the preſent bad ſtate of the Company's credit is only an effect, or conſequence, of the ruinous ſituation of affairs in India; and, of courſe, that the object of national apprehenſion is the ruin or loſs of that mighty and important branch of national intereſt, which hath been committed to the charge of the Company, in a manner ſo complete and implicit, that the name, as well as the intereſt of the nation, nay the very name of the object itſelf, hath been ſunk and loſt in that of the Company: this Company, which is but the temporary farmer, having been, to all intents and purpoſes, ſubſtituted in the ſtead of not only the ſovereign proprietor, but even of the farm itſelf. And it will farther appear, that the danger which threatens this object is not to be averted by blindly ſupporting the credit of the Company: but, on the contrary, that the nation will, by affording this blind ſupport, only furniſh the means of com-

completing that ruin, which is already ſo far advanced. To prevent this danger demands meaſures of a very different nature: and we ſhall proceed to point out theſe meaſures; which, had they been applied in time, would, we humbly conceive, have ſufficed to prevent the ruin or loſs of this important concern: and which, if matters are not paſt remedy, may yet ſerve to reſtore them.

EVIL AND ABUSE IN THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL, AND THE MEANS TO REMEDY THEM.

IT is a common ſaying that, the cauſe of an evil being known, the remedy is readily diſcovered; and, upon the ſtrength of this maxim, ſeveral, who think they have hit upon ſome one cauſe of evil in the political government of Bengal, have taken upon them to preſcribe a remedy; which is pronounced an univerſal panacea, a ſalve for every ſore: but no ſooner have they produced their ware, than the eye hath diſcovered it to be mere powder of poſt; or ſomething equally unavailing.

Few of theſe preſcriptions have at all attracted notice; the propoſal for protecting the liberty of the ſubject from the deſpotiſm of government, by the inſtitution of native juries, was indeed extremely well calculated to pleaſe Britiſh ſpeculation; and therefore, like the device of hanging the bell about the cat's neck, it was highly

highly applauded by thoſe who never adverted to the difference betwixt Britain and Bengal, in point of general conſtitution of government and diſpoſition of the natives. But, for practice, it muſt appear a mere chimera to ſuch as conſider, on the one hand, that men, who are ſlaves to their government and its officers in every other capacity, cannot poſſibly be free in that of jurymen; and that juries, if they are not free and impartial, avail nothing: and, on the other hand, that if the natives ſhould be actually endowed with the real cap of liberty in the jury room, there is danger, nay, there is a certainty, that they would make bold to wear it elſewhere; and then, adieu to the Engliſh dominion in Bengal. In few words, the power of the Engliſh government, and the freedom of native juries, are two things that cannot poſſibly exiſt together in Bengal; the life of the one muſt unavoidably cauſe the death of the other: and, however harſh this doctrine may ſound in a freeborn Engliſh ear, the force and truth of it will immediately ſtrike the politician.

Equally unavailing is that propoſal for ſecuring the liberty and property of the ſubject, from the oppreſſion and extortion of government, by granting to the native a perpetual property in land; without providing him the ſmalleſt ſecurity for the free poſſeſſion of its produce; which, ſo long as government ſtands on its preſent footing, is liable to be wreſted from him ſo ſoon as acquired.

But it would ſeem, that the reaſon why theſe political phyſicians have been ſo unlucky in their preſcriptions is, that they have proceeded upon falſe principles; as having miſtaken the nature of the malady. For they have either aſſigned no one certain cauſe of evil; or elſe they have traced it no farther than to the perſons who have executed the government of thoſe countries, otherwiſe to the Directors: as if all the evil had proceeded from ſome particular viciouſneſs in their diſpoſition, as if they had been ſinners above all men, or as if no men would have done the wicked deed but they: whereas he who is the leaſt acquainted with human nature will allow, that few, if any men, would have made any better uſe of their powers and

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opportunities; nay he will add, that every other government on earth, would act the very part that this Bengal government hath done, provided it held the ſame views and intereſts, together with the ſame powers and opportunities. And, if ſo, what can be more abſurd, than the propoſal to remedy the evils and abuſes of this government, by ſending out Superviſors, with the ſame or greater powers, and conſequently poſſeſſing greater opportunities of promoting their own views and intereſts; which are exactly the ſame as theſe of the perſons complained of; ſeeing that, as the ſame cauſe of evil which exiſted in the Governors, would have exiſted in the Superviſors, theſe ſimilar cauſes muſt have operated ſimilar effects.

Indeed we ſhall err widely, if we look for the original cauſe of evil in theſe Governors: for, on inſpecting the preceding deſcription of this Bengal government, we perceive, that their maladminiſtration is itſelf but an effect, or conſequence, naturally flowing from the total want of certain fundamental principles or powers; which, in every other government, ſerve to reſtrain the party governing from doing

ing or permitting injury, and impel it to promote the good of the party governed: and as the want of theſe reſtraining and impelling powers hath unavoidably produced, the firſt tyranny, and the latter anarchy, it is plain, that all the evils and abuſes in the government of Bengal have ſprung from this deficiency. It farther appears, from the ſame deſcription, that the want of theſe reſtraining and impelling powers ariſes from two different cauſes; the firſt being the particular condition and conſtitution of the ſovereign: and the ſecond is there termed the diſtance of ſituation, betwixt the ſovereign reſidence and the country governed; tho' the ſequel will evince this latter to be rather a radical defect in the nature of that ſyſtem, which the Directors have adopted for the government of this diſtant dominion. That theſe have been the two original cauſes of the tyranny and anarchy, and conſequently of all the evils and abuſes in this Bengal government, including theſe of the commercial deſpotiſm, is ſufficiently evident. We ſhall therefore proceed to point out the means of removing theſe cauſes, as the only effectual method

thod of remedying the evils. And as each of the two cauſes hath contributed its proper ſhare of the evil, and each demands a diſtinct remedy, we ſhall conſider them ſeparately.

With regard to the condition and conſtitution of the Company, we have already mentioned the ſeveral circumſtances that diſqualify her for the office of a ſupreme ſovereign; here therefore we ſhall only recapitulate, or collect them into one point of view. The firſt defect is, her impotence, or want of power to promote good government in her dominion: and this proceeds from her being, with reſpect to her deputed government, a meer fellow ſubject, totally void of ſupreme legiſlative and judicial powers; and conſequently incapable of inforcing obedience; or of puniſhing diſobedience: and this want of authority and power in the ſovereign, we have ſhown to be a principal cauſe of deſpotiſm in the deputed government. A ſecond defect in the conſtitution of the Company is her want of inclination, or rather of intereſt, to diſcharge the duty of a good ſovereign; and this ariſes from the fluctuating and hourly mutable ſtate

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of the proprietary, the temporary and ſhort duration of her corporate exiſtence, the ſtill ſhorter tenor of this ſovereignty, and the annual rotation of her executive government; for, in conſequence of theſe ſeveral circumſtances in her ſituation, her views are narrow, contracted, and rapacious; the ſole aim of all her meaſures being to make the moſt of the preſent moment. The third defect is the mercantile capacity of this ſovereign Company; and from this defect alone flow evils ſufficient to ruin the intereſt of the country ſubjected to her government: for, in conſequence of her mercantile capacity, her deputed government acts as a merchant; and, in conſequence of her ſovereign capacity, all her mercantile ſervants aſſume the authority of ſovereigns.

Theſe are the principal defects in the being and conſtitution of this ſovereign Company; and it is evident, that ſuch defects in the ſovereign, muſt have contributed largely towards the exiſtence of abuſe, in the deputed government. But theſe defects might have been, in a great meaſure, remedied, and their conſequences prevented, by a ſimple act of parliament,

ment, paſt by the national government, at the time it thought proper to commit the charge of this important branch of national intereſt, to the care of the Company. This act might have been entitled, "An act for better enabling the Eaſt India Company to adminiſter the political government, and to protect, maintain and defend certain ſtates and countries in India, which have become ſubjected to the dominion of Britain, and which, for ſundry weighty conſiderations, it hath been judged proper to commit to her charge." And it might have been conceived in the following, or ſuch like terms.

"Whereas it appears, that the want of a proper legiſlative authority over the miniſters and ſervants, employed by the Company to execute the ſovereign government of theſe ſubjected dominions, muſt be productive of many abuſes, detrimental as well to the intereſt of the Company, as to the honour and intereſt of the Britiſh nation. Be it enacted by &c. that, from the time of paſſing this act, the Company ſhall poſſeſs the power of legiſlation, or making laws, for the government of this foreign dominion: and the laws thus

enacted by the Company, ſhall be equally binding on all her miniſters, ſervants, and ſubjects, in that dominion, as are the acts of parliament on the ſubjects of Britain. And being farther ſenſible of the many inconveniences, that muſt ariſe from the Company's incapacity of puniſhing the offences committed by her miniſters, and ſervants abroad, otherwiſe than by applying to courts of juſtice that are foreign to her government; where ſhe cannot convict, through the difficulty of obtaining the evidence required by the forms of theſe courts; and where ſhe is deterred from proſecuting, by the fear of divulging the ſecrets of her government; inſomuch that, rather than apply to theſe courts, ſhe muſt ſubmit to the moſt audacious acts of diſobedience, and maladminiſtration; and conſidering that ſuch incapacity in the Company muſt diſcourage all good government, and produce tyranny and anarchy in this dominion; be it enacted, that the Company ſhall have authority to erect courts of juſtice, and appoint judges; with the like powers, as are veſted in his majeſty's judges, and courts of judicature, for trying and judging

ing all ſuits and cauſes, or offences committed within the limits of this Indian dominion; and for puniſhing the ſame, either capitally, or by fine, impriſonment, and baniſhment, though to Europe only. And whereas it is probable, that ſome of the miniſters or ſervants of the Company may, by various methods, elude the juſtice of her courts abroad, and eſcape to Europe; in order therefore to prevent ſuch dangerous illuſion of juſtice, it is enacted, that the Company's court of directors ſhall, on due information being made to them, have power at all times to call before them ſuch eſcaping delinquents, and to try and puniſh them, for the offences they may have committed within the limits of this Indian dominion, in like manner as they could have been tried or puniſhed by the Company's courts abroad. And becauſe the liberty of appealing from the Company's courts of juſtice, to the judgment of any other courts, muſt be productive of the ſame inconveniences to the Company, as a trial of the ſame cauſe in the firſt inſtance would have been, and muſt therefore deter the Company from ever availing herſelf of the judicial powers

granted by this act; it is enacted, that delinquents ſhall have no liberty of appealing from the Company's courts abroad, excepting to the Court of Directors at home, or to a general court of Proprietors; whoſe judgment in all ſuch caſes ſhall be final. And as the Court of Directors have, and may be, diſcouraged, from proſecuting or puniſhing the crimes of their rich ſervants, by the fear of danger to their own private intereſt, from a combination of the friends and abettors of ſuch rich delinquents at a future annual election, be it enacted, that the 24 Directors, being ſuch at the time of paſſing this act, ſhall continue in office, *durante vita*."

" And whereas it appears, that the liberty of daily ſelling, transferring, and alienating the ſhares in the Company's ſtock, of which this ſovereign dominion forms a part, tends to infuſe into the proprietors a ſpirit of rapacity, that may be productive of much damage to the ſeveral intereſts concerned; and hath many other very pernicious conſequences; whilſt it reflects diſgrace on the dignity of all other ſovereigns; be it enacted, that no proprietor in this Company's ſtock, of which

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the ſovereignty forms a part, ſhall have power to ſend his ſhare in the ſaid ſovereignty to market, like as it were a hog or bullock, and to ſell, transfer, and alienate the ſame; but that the ſeveral proprietors of this ſtock and ſovereignty, being ſuch at the time of paſſing this act, ſhall remain and continue proprietors, without the power of alienation, except in the caſes that ſhall be hereafter ſpecified.

And whereas it hath been repreſented that the Company's holding this ſovereignty by leaſe, and for a ſhort term, may not only alienate her care and prevent her from ſtudying and promoting the laſting welfare of the country, but may induce her to pillage, plunder and waſte it; be it enacted, that the Company ſhall hold the ſovereignty of this dominion, *quamdiu ſe bene geſſerit*; to the end, that ſhe may conſider and treat it, not as the property of another, but as her own inheritance.

And whereas the Company exerciſes traffic in this dominion; and, in conſequence thereof, her miniſters do likewiſe traffic; and whereas the exerciſe of traffic is evidently repugnant to a due diſcharge

charge of the duties of government, as being unavoidably productive of deſtructive monopolies and oppreſſion; all which it is impoſſible to prevent, ſo long as the Company herſelf ſhall continue a merchant; be it enacted, that this Company's commercial charter ſhall be diſſolved; and ſhe, and her miniſters, ſhall be reſtrained from trading or trafficking, directly or indirectly, within the limits of this Indian dominion, under certain penalties to be mentioned in a new charter, which ſhall be granted to this Company, conſtituting her the United Company of Engliſh Eaſt India Sovereigns."

Theſe powers, grants, limitations, and reſtrictions, would have qualified the Company, ſo far as the nature of things could admit, for adminiſtring the political government; but, in her military capacity, as the ſovereign protector, maintainer and defender of this Indian dominion, ſhe hath been ſtill leſs qualified, and would therefore have required ſtill more extraordinary powers. Theſe however we ſhall not ſpecify, as apprehending, that what hath been already demanded will ſhock. The grant of ſupreme legiſlative and judicial powers

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to ſubjects, over their fellow ſubjects, muſt ſeem an abſurd communication of that which is incommunicable: the prohibition of ſelling and tranferring the ſhares of ſtock, would be termed a tyrannical reſtraint on private property: the perpetual grant of this ſovereignty to the Company, muſt be deemed an unjuſt alienation of the Crown's and Nation's rights: and the diſſolution of the Company's commercial charter, would alter her very being and nature. In ſhort, if we regard the propoſed act ſimply, it will appear a collection of abſurd inconſiſtencies, and ridiculous nonſenſe: but if we conſider it conjunctly with the cauſe or purpoſe for which it is required, then every abſurdity vaniſhes from the act, and centers in the cauſe that renders it neceſſary. For we appeal to common ſenſe, whether every circumſtance, ſpecified in this propoſed act, is not indiſpenſably neceſſary, to qualify the Company for the ſovereign office of adminiſtring the political government of this Indian dominion: and, if that neceſſity is admitted, then doth the act become a rational and neceſſary conſequence, of government's having previouſly committed

ted that ſovereign charge to the Company. Nay, we muſt take the liberty to add, that government, by committing ſuch a charge to the Company, and at ſame time totally neglecting to capacitate her for ſupporting it, is in a great meaſure acceſſory to all the ruinous conſequences that have enſued from her incapacity.

I am ſenſible it will be urged, that we proceed upon falſe premiſes; for that government never conſidered theſe countries as ſubjected to the dominion of Britain; that it never granted the ſovereignty of them to the Company; nor ſuppoſed her to be the ſovereign; but that it only acquieſced in her holding the Dewanny, on condition of her paying a part of the revenues to the nation; and, of conſequence, that government never conſidered the inhabitants of thoſe countries as ſubjects to the government of Britain. But this is a moſt flimſy evaſion, like that of ſhutting our eyes to the ſun, that we may deny it is day: government granted to the Company a right or permiſſion to hold the Dewanny; which is explained to be, the power of collecting and appropriating the reve-

revenues of Bengal; and, in conſideration of this grant, government demanded and received a ſhare of theſe revenues; government therefore, in its legiſlative capacity, admits a knowledge, that the Company did poſſeſs the power of collecting, and alſo of applying the revenues of Bengal, *ad libitum*; and, amongſt other purpoſes, to that of defraying the charges of the military, as well as the civil, government: and government well knows, that the power which defrays the charges of the military and civil government, muſt hold the abſolute direction of both: and what conſtitutes ſovereign power, but the abſolute direction of the military and civil government, together with the diſpoſal of the revenues? But, excluſive of the Dewanny contract, the Company hath applied, in every other characteriſtic of a ſovereign, to government, in its legiſlative capacity: ſhe hath brought a bill into parliament, for the grant of certain military powers and indulgences, for the better enabling her to defend, what ſhe there modeſtly, though vaguely, terms her territorial acquiſitions, (but which, by referring to the Dewanny contract, is ex-

plained to include Bengal :) and ſhe hath applied for certain juridical powers and grants, for the better adminiſtration of the juriſdiction, not in her commercial factories, but over the whole country of Bengal: therefore government hath been informed, in its legiſlative capacity, by the Company herſelf, that ſhe adminiſtred the military and civil government, and appropriated the revenues of Bengal; conſequently that ſhe was, in every ſenſe and reſpect, the actual ſovereign of that country.

Now government could not be ignorant that the Company is a ſubject to the national government of Britain; and that, as ſuch, ſhe could have neither right, power, nor force to ſubject this dominion, or afterwards to hold it in ſubjection, ſaving what ſhe derived from the national government; conſequently government, as it underſtood that theſe countries were ſubjected to the Company, muſt have known that they were ſubjected to the dominion of Britain. And as government did permit the Company to retain this dominion; and furniſhed her with a military force, knowing it to be for the purpoſe of maintaining

taining dominion, it is plain, that the Company hath held this dominion, no otherwiſe than by the grant and ſupport of government.

But if the Company be the ſovereign of Bengal, the inhabitants muſt, *per* force, be her ſubjects; and if the Company holds this ſovereignty as a ſubject to the government of Britain, by virtue of the grant or permiſſion of that government, and by means of a force furniſhed by the ſame government, in what relation can this government regard the inhabitants of Bengal? In that of ſubjects ſurely; tho' the degree hath, by the deed of government, been ſomewhat implicated; like that of a child begot by the father upon his own daughter. And ſubjects they have been to the government of Britain, in every ſenſe and meaning; they have yielded obedience to thoſe ſubjects of this government whom it appointed to rule over them; and they have yielded the fruits, as well as the duties of obedience.

But the government of Britain, which hath thus by force ſubjected the inhabitants of Bengal to its dominion; which hath, for a ſeries of years, held them in

ſubjection; and hath, all along, exacted from them the tribute of ſubjection; hath withheld from them the protection due to ſubjects. For it hath ſcrupulouſly withdrawn itſelf from all regard or attention to their government; and hath left it implicitly to the guidance of a few merchants; whom it knew to be perfectly unqualified for adminiſtring any ſort of government: in conſequence of which, theſe wretched people have, for many years, been ruled, without law, juſtice, or government. Unhappy ſubjects, who are forced to obey a ſovereign that refuſes them protection, and leaves them expoſed to all the horrors of tyranny and anarchy.

It will nevertheleſs be ſtill inſiſted that government could not, without committing a number of irregularities and abſurdities, endow the Company in the manner ſpecified; as alſo that the Company, when thus endowed, would ſtill have been altogether unequal to the charge of regularly adminiſtring a ſovereign government. But ſurely government, if it would not or could not capacitate the Company to regularly govern thoſe countries, ought not to have furniſhed her the means of oppreſſing,

ſing, ravaging, pillaging, and ruining them; to the diſgrace of humanity, and the indelible reproach of the Britiſh name. Government would have acted a part far more conſiſtent with the rules of honour and humanity, if, inſtead of furniſhing to the Company this military power, it had reſtrained her from availing herſelf of the advantage, gained by force and chance, over that mild, unwarlike, but induſtrious people; and obliged her to leave them to their own government.

But then the ſituation of affairs in thoſe countries, where the nation and Company held ſuch a valuable commercial intereſt, rendered it highly improper and dangerous to leave the native government to itſelf: moreover the nation and Company could not, in ſuch caſe, have acquired the mighty wealth and other benefits that have been derived from the conqueſt, or aſſumed dominion, of thoſe countries. Oh wealth, baſely acquired, and fooliſhly applied! Was there then no medium, no middle channel, thro' which government might have ſteered the Nation and Company to this ſame wealth and benefits, clear of all theſe irregularities, incongruities, inhumanities,

manities, and reproaches? Yes ſurely; and one ſo obvious and conſpicuous, that it is impoſſible to conceive how government could be ſo induſtrious as to ſhun or miſs it. Had the national government taken upon itſelf the charge of ſuperintending the government of thoſe countries, as reaſon and the nature of things directed, then would it have furniſhed them a ſovereign, naturally free from all the defects of the Company, and completely endued with all the qualifications of power, ability, and inclination from intereſt, to protect and regularly govern them.

For it is plain, that the national government, poſſeſſing ſupreme legiſlative, and judicial power, muſt have been capable of enforcing obedience to the laws which it might have enacted for the good government of thoſe countries; and of puniſhing diſobedience, not only in the natives, but in the miniſters whom it would have employed to execute that government; as theſe muſt have been its own ſubjects. And, on the other hand, the nation being an immutable body, and holding this ſovereignty in her own right, and by perpetual tenor; her government muſt

muſt have been actuated, by the ſtrong motive of ſelf-intereſt, to exert itſelf in promoting the real and laſting welfare of thoſe countries. And as to the commercial deſpotiſm, it could never have exiſted under the national government.

It therefore follows, that the national government, being perfectly free from all the defects of the Company, would, by the ſimple, natural, and rational act of aſſuming the adminiſtration of government in thoſe countries, have prevented or reformed all the ſeveral abuſes or evils that have ſprung from the defective conſtitution of the Company, as ſovereign. But beſides the mighty reform of abuſes, that muſt have been immediately cauſed by thus changing the perſon of the ſovereign; there is another advantage, which, though it cannot be ſaid to ſpring directly from that change, yet would it have enſued as a natural conſequence of the national government's taking upon itſelf this ſovereign charge; and that is, the creation or inſtitution of a new intereſt in that country; a ſort of middle ſtate, betwixt the native ſubjects and their foreign government.

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The middle ſtate here meant is the Eaſt India Company, (or which is the ſame, her ſervants in Bengal;) which, being now reduced to the condition of a ſubject, tho' ſtill retaining all her commercial privileges and intereſts in that country, would have formed an intermediate link in the political chain, ſerving to connect the natives with their government, and government with the natives. For, in every one circumſtance that reſpected the liberty of the ſubject, this middle ſtate muſt have held preciſely the ſame intereſt as the natives; and, in conſequence, the ſame inclination to oppoſe all oppreſſion of government: and, in every thing that reſpected the real intereſt, the power, or honour of the ſovereign, the community of *Natale Solum* muſt have led it to ſupport the meaſures of government. Therefore, this middle ſtate, holding a great weight in that dependent dominion, (not indeed from its numbers, but from the powerful ſupport and influence of the Company, which would have been ſtill very reſpectable in the ſovereign country,) muſt have carried a mighty poiſe into the ſcale of liberty, in oppoſition to the deſpotiſm of government;

ment; whilſt, at ſame time, it would have created no danger to the power of the ſovereign. And a middle ſtate of this nature muſt have been of inexpreſſible utility; facilitating, in many reſpects, the eſtabliſhment of a regular political œconomy in the government of theſe countries. For, in ſuch caſe, the ſovereign could, with propriety, efficacy, and ſafety, have conferred every reaſonable privilege on the whole body of ſubjects in this foreign dominion: ſeeing that the exertion of theſe privileges might have been artfully confined to this middle ſtate: and, as on the one hand, this fineſſe would not have, in any ſhape, withheld the benefit of theſe privileges from the natives; but, on the contrary, would have rendered them more effectually uſeful to the whole body of ſubjects, than if they had been committed either entirely or in common to the natives; becauſe the Company's ſervants would, from intereſt, have had the ſame inclination as the natives, to exert theſe privileges for the common good; and they would have had infinitely greater power, from their ſuperior activity, intrepidity, and firmneſs, as alſo from their ſuperior

opportunities of obtaining redreſs elſewhere againſt any infringement made by government: ſo, on the other hand, the authority of the ſovereign could have incurred no riſk from theſe privileges in the hands of Europeans; whereas there is great danger in attempting to confer on the natives a power to controul even the deſpotiſm of government. With this middle ſtate the power of juries would have been effectual to the ſubject, and harmleſs to the ſovereign: however, we ſhall have occaſion to be more particular on this head in the ſequel.

But if the national government could, by taking this ſovereign charge upon itſelf, have prevented or reformed theſe many evils and abuſes that have ariſen from the defects of the Company; and could have likewiſe created other ſuch advantages, facilitating the eſtabliſhment of a regular government in thoſe countries; what reaſon can be aſſigned for government's declining this charge, and devolving it on the Company? Government could not ſurely ſuppoſe that this important concern would be managed to greater national advantage by the Company, than

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by itſelf: ſeeing that common ſenſe might have foreſeen, what experience hath ſince proved, that, under the management of the Company, the intereſt of Britain in thoſe countries would, in the ſpace of a very few years, be completely annihilated; that the countries themſelves would either be completely ruined, or otherwiſe loſt to enemies; and that the wealth, which was extorted from them by rapine and general havoc, being imported into Britain in the hands of a few indiſcreet individuals, would create a torrent of profuſion, extravagance, luxury, and prodigality, that would ſweep all before it into the gulf of bankruptcy, perdition, and deſpair. Whereas, under the regular adminiſtration of national government, thoſe countries might have been ſtill preſerved in a flouriſhing condition; and, in conſequence, ſtill capable of yielding to Britain a tribute little inferior to the ſurplus revenue which the Company received in the firſt year of the Dewanny: which tribute, arriving immediately at the public treaſury of Britain, and being there applied to the diminution of taxes, and conſequent reduction of the price of neceſſaries and labour, would have proved a

gentle univerſal ſhower, reviving our decayed and drooping manufactures and commerce.

But neither could government be induced to confer this ſovereignty on the Company, by any motive of regard to the true intereſt of the proprietors: ſeeing it was palpably evident that this charge, being ſo unmeaſurably ſuperior to her powers of ſupporting it, muſt unavoidably cruſh her to ruin; and, along with her, the countries ſubjected to her rule; and, it is to be feared, even that community of which ſhe forms a part. Whereas, if the national government had taken into its own hands, and carefully adminiſtered the government of thoſe countries, whilſt it continued the Company in poſſeſſion of her commercial privileges, ſhe would have continued to divide, in the firſt place, the ſix per cent. which her commerce, (unaided by revenue) afforded; even when burdened with the neceſſary expence of a ſmall military force maintained for the guard of that commerce in thoſe foreign countries, and which muſt have been equal to four per cent. on her capital: but this commercial military expence being rendered in a great meaſure unneceſ-

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ſary, by the immediate protection of national government, the ſaving thereof would have added two per cent. to her dividend: and the equivalent, which government would have paid for her fortreſſes, munition, &c. being added to her capital ſtock, would have encreaſed her dividend nearly one per cent. more; whilſt her ſtock itſelf would, at this day, have been really, and intrinſically worth 220l. inſtead of ....., its preſent real and intrinſic value.

It would be inſulting the underſtanding of miniſtry, to ſuppoſe that it had been reſtrained from aſſuming this ſovereign charge, by any delicacy of regard to the ideal right of the Company; derived from either conqueſts, as ſubjects; or from the ſham grant of a man, who had not power to diſpoſe of a ſingle bega of land, nay, not of a cocoa-nut-tree in that country; and conſequently whoſe grant of the ſovereignty of Bengal could contribute nothing more to inveſtiture or poſſeſſion, than his grant of the crown of Britain could. Though if we ſhould (for the ſake of argument) ſuppoſe, that miniſtry had really admitted ſome ſuch right, we muſt ſtill

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eſteem its acquieſcence in that right a moſt abſurd and wildly miſtaken indulgence; ſeeing it evidently tended to the ruin of the party whom it meant to favour.

There hath been, however, one weighty argument againſt government's aſſuming this Indian charge, which is, the danger ariſing to national liberty from government's, (or, in other words, the crown or miniſtry's) acquiring ſuch an acceſſion of influence, as muſt ariſe from the poſſeſſion of the many emoluments, places, poſts, &c. annexed to this Indian charge: whereas liberty is completely ſecured from ſuch danger, whilſt the Company poſſeſſes it. And the certainty of this double maxim, viz. the danger from government's poſſeſſing this charge, and the ſecurity whilſt it is in the hands of the Company, is as generally eſtabliſhed as almoſt any one human principle: for, being violently enforced by thoſe whoſe perſonal views lead them to oppoſe adminiſtration, and at ſame time not ſimply allowed, but even inculcated by miniſtry itſelf, it hath been readily credited by thoſe who, their perſonal intereſt not being ſo deeply concerned, were leſs curious to inveſtigate the truth.

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It may be deemed preſumptuous in an individual, to queſtion the orthodoxy of a maxim ſo powerfully enforced by one party, readily allowed by the other, and almoſt univerſally credited: tho' the extraordinary circumſtance, of two violent rival parties concurring ſo exactly on a point, where their perſonal intereſt ſeems to be ſo materially and ſo oppoſitely engaged, would lead a byſtander to ſuppoſe, that either one of the two parties muſt be miſtaken; or otherwiſe, that one or both muſt miſrepreſent: at any rate, that uncommon inſtance of candour, in miniſtry's preaching up a doctrine ſo repugnant to that which it pretends to be its own perſonal intereſt, would induce ſuch byſtander to ſuſpect its ſincerity. However, as a right underſtanding of this point may conſiderably import the public, at this critical juncture, I ſhall venture diſcloſing my ſentiments, at the riſk of cenſure for prolixity, as well as impertinence.

With regard to the firſt part of the maxim, I conceive that the danger to liberty, from government's holding this charge in its own hands, is ſuppoſed to ariſe from the influence which the miniſter would

acquire,

acquire, over the two ſubject branches of legiſlature, (thoſe bulwarks of liberty) by means of the many emoluments, places, poſts, &c. annexed to the poſſeſſion of that charge. But before we admit that the miniſters holding this charge would be creative of that dangerous influence, we ought to be ſatisfied that he doth not already poſſeſs it, by other means; for, if he doth already poſſeſs ſuch influence by other means, it is plain that the Indian charge cannot confer it; nor will it avail to ſhut one door, whilſt there are others open to admit him. And that the miniſter hath long been in full and plenary poſſeſſion of ſuch influence, we have ever heard aſſerted by theſe very men who ſo loudly enforce the danger of his acquiring it, by means of this Indian charge: nay, we have much better authority than their contradictory aſſertions, (even that of fact and daily experience,) for believing that the miniſter hath and doth poſſeſs poſts and places, and that, on any emergency, he hath in his power other means equally effectual, towards creating and holding ſuch influence, in a degree as plenary and complete as his own heart can deſire. And,

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confer more than he already poſſeſſes. I may venture to add, that we certainly hold our liberty by ſome latent ſecurity, more powerful than that of parliament itſelf, which neither the miniſter's influence over parliament, nor poſts and places, will ever induce him to attack, or enable him to ſubdue; for that, otherwiſe, we ſhould have been diveſted of our privileges and liberty long ago. And, upon conſidering theſe ſeveral circumſtances, I conclude, that if this Indian charge was in the hands of government to-morrow, it would neither enable, nor induce the miniſter, to attempt a jot more againſt our liberty, than he hath done, can do, and will do, without it. However, by way of reinforcing my argument, I ſhall add that, if the plan which I mean to propoſe ſhould be carried into execution, it would leave but few of theſe emoluments, &c. to the immediate diſpoſal of the miniſter; and, poſſibly, this declaration may but little recommend it to his favour.

But ſtill, if we were to admit a real danger to liberty from the miniſter's poſſeſſing theſe emoluments, &c. it remains

to

to be proved that liberty hath been, is, and will be ſecured from ſuch danger, by the Company's holding that Indian charge. And, when the nature of this ſecurity comes to be examined, I apprehend it will be found more difficult to prove this latter part of the maxim, than the former. For it is notorious that, ever until the late diſtraction in the Company's affairs, the arbitrary application of theſe emoluments, poſts, &c. was veſted in the Directors; and indeed the entire powers and intereſts of the Company; inſomuch that the Directors might, with propriety, be termed the Company. So that the whole ſecurity of national liberty, and, of courſe, the ſole obſtruction to the miniſter's dangerous views, depended on the integrity and independent ſpirit of 24 Directors; of whom, again, one or two generally leads all the reſt. Conſequently, to come at the fingering of theſe dangerous emoluments, &c. the miniſter had only to ſubvert the integrity, or ſubdue the independance, of theſe Directors. And, to effect this, a miniſter poſſeſſed more than one infallible recipe. By artfully joining the mighty influence which he held in the

Company's ſtock thro' his numerous dependants, to one or other of two parties contending violently for the direction, he could reduce both to a perfect dependance on himſelf: by the ſame means he could hold them in ſubiection: but ſtill more, by the awe of wreſting from them the ſweet management of this Indian ſovereignty, which they were ſenſible he could do by a word. And thus he could work upon their fears. But inclination would naturally and powerfully lead the Directors to throw themſelves into the arms of a miniſter; not ſo much for his immediate aſſiſtance; tho' even that might be of great uſe, for rendering matters eaſy with the proprietors, as well as parliament and the nation; but becauſe, on theſe terms, they ſecured, in him, an omnipotent ſupporter and all powerful advocate, againſt the day of diſtreſs, which they well knew muſt come, and that ſoon: whereas, otherwiſe, they muſt lay their account with finding him a ſevere judge, and bitter proſecutor.

By theſe ſeveral operations on the hopes and fears of the Directors, it was extremely eaſy for a miniſter to render them as

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pliant as a glove; as obedient as a ſpaniel, to fetch and carry at bidding, And the Directors being once reduced to this ſtate of dependance, it is evident, that the miniſter muſt poſſeſs a full and arbitrary power over all the emoluments, poſts, places, &c. appertaining to this Indian charge. But the diſpoſal of the preſent emoluments, &c. was a trivial matter, compared with other advantages, which this Indian buſineſs, whilſt in the hands of the Company, preſented to an artful and enterpriſing miniſter. For, under the plauſible and indeed undeniable pretext of qualifying the Company for adminiſtring this ſovereign charge, he might have drawn from the legiſlature certain military as well as political powers; which, being gradually augmented as occaſion offered, might have at laſt eſtabliſhed a ſort of power, in this government, diſtinct from and independent of the legiſlature: the exertion of which power, being confided to the Directors, would in fact have reſted with the miniſter. Here indeed was a real danger to liberty; provided it had been poſſible to hold up this Indian buſineſs, in the hands of the Company, for

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any length of time; for, notwithſtanding I conſider national liberty as inexpugnable to the open aſſaults of a miniſter, yet, from ſuch a ſecret convenient and commanding poſt as this mentioned, he might have made frequent ſly and ſucceſsful incurſions on the confines of liberty; which would have greatly ſtraitened her quarters, and waſted her ſtrength.

On the other hand, if that Indian charge had been veſted in the national government, liberty muſt have been perfectly ſecured from this laſt mentioned danger; for, in ſuch caſe, there could have been no pretext for demanding theſe extraordinary diſtinct powers; and, conſequently, no opportunity of eſtabliſhing that truly dangerous *imperium in imperio*. And even in the application of the ordinary powers, emoluments, &c. a miniſter muſt have been ſubjected to many troubleſome checks, and reſtraints. His Majeſty, who can have no views diſtinct from the general intereſt of his people, muſt have held a principal voice in every meaſure; as likewiſe muſt ſome others his counſellors. Parliament too muſt have proved an inconvenient reſtraint on a miniſter; particularly

cularly in the article of eſtimates and accounts of revenue, which muſt have been ſubmitted to its inſpection; and notwithſtanding the certainty of carrying points by a majority of voices, yet, as there will ever be ſome refractory members, theſe might have carried tales to the public; which, provided this charge had been in the hands of national government, would have judged itſelf intereſted in the affair; and would therefore have taken the liberty to criticiſe his meaſures, or cenſure his miſconduct. Whereas, this buſineſs being ſecured, as private property, in the hands of the Company, king, parliament, and nation were all excluded from participation: the proprietors alone had a right to examine meaſures or accounts; and, the majority of them upon all queſtions being mercenary retainers to miniſtry and the direction, they muſt have ever been a mere *ſervile pecus*. So that the buſineſs might have been ſnugly confined to three or four miniſterial aſſociates, with their faithful dependants in Leadenhall Street; whilſt the miniſter needed never appear in the affair; free from care, charge, or trouble; and irreſponſible for either

either meaſures, or conſequences; he might enjoy all the ſweets, without the leaſt alloy of bitter.

Sure I am if I had been miniſter, and minded to make a job of this Indian buſineſs, I would certainly have exerted myſelf moſt ſedulouſly to preſerve it in the hands of the Company. And, to divert the nation from ever turning her eye towards it, I would have ſtrenuouſly inculcated the rights of the Company, national faith, the impoſſibility of conducting this buſineſs otherwiſe than through the Company; and, above all things, I would, by my emiſſaries, have alarmed the public, with fears of danger to their liberty, ſhould this buſineſs ever come into the hands of government; whilſt, by the ſame canal, I would have trumpeted forth my own candour, diſintereſtedneſs as a miniſter, indifference to power, and delicate regard to national liberty and private property, in thus diſclaiming an object ſo replete with miniſterial advantages, which was within my power. And thus would I have continued the game, until it was up: and then I would have directed the enquiries, which decency and regard to appearances

extorted

extorted from me, in ſuch a manner as to ſuppreſs, inſtead of inveſtigating: though, at ſame time, I would have boldly expreſſed my indignation at the Company's miſconduct; and loudly denounced vengeance againſt the individuals that had ſhared in the plunder; not a ſoul that was guilty ſhould eſcape. And, to wind up the whole affair dextrouſly, I would have taſked my own powers, and thoſe of my myrmidons, to repreſent all theſe Indian acquiſitions as a tranſitory, caſual, and accidental piece of buſineſs; which was altogether out of our tract; and which, if the nation had ever engaged in maintaining them, would have ruined and exhauſted her: and ſo the nation was to thank me, for withholding her from ruin.

In this manner, I ſay, would I, who am a reptile, have acted, had I been miniſter, and minded to make a job of this buſineſs: but I am far from intimating or inſinuating that our miniſters, who are men of high birth and ſtrict honour, could be capable of admitting even a thought of taking ſuch baſe advantages.

All that I have ſaid is only meant to ſhow, that a miniſter, if he had the inclination, poſſeſſed an infinitely fairer opportunity, of converting this buſineſs to ſiniſter purpoſes, whilſt it was in the hands of the Company; than he poſſibly could have had, from the ſame buſineſs, under the conduct of national government. And, from thence, I would infer that, had this buſineſs been in the hands of government, our liberty, nay and our property too, would have been ſecured from many dangers, to which they have been expoſed, whilſt this buſineſs hath been in the hands of the Company.

I cannot then conceive what other objections could be ſtarted againſt government's taking upon itſelf the charge of this Indian dominion: unleſs it be the old trite arguments of timid ſluggiſh indolence, want of enterprize, &c. That, the diſtance of ſituation rendering it impoſſible for Britain to properly maintain and govern this dominion, it would become an object of no true value or importance, but rather a heavy load exhauſting her ſtrength. But it is now more than time for the nation to recal her faith from men

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whom ſhe hath ſufficient ground to ſuſpect of deceit; and, rouſing her ſenſes, to take the liberty of trying theſe matters by the ſtandard of her own reaſon; which we ſhall endeavour to aid by the following hints.

To properly demonſtrate the true value and importance of this Indian dominion to Britain, would demand a volume; we have, in the firſt part, preſented a ſlight ſketch of it; here therefore we ſhall offer only one or two remarks reſpecting its importance to our finances; and though we do not offer theſe remarks as the reſult of exact calculation, yet will they ſerve to throw a light on this ſubject. Ever ſince the laſt war Britain hath paid annually to foreign creditors, in intereſt, about 1,500,000 l. and this is paid, not in paper, but all in hard money; or, otherwiſe, in what is equivalent, the ſtoppage of ſo much hard money as is reckoned to come into Britain by the balance of her trade. On the other hand, the net ſpecie balance of trade with all the world, (excluſive of that part which ſtrictly and properly may be termed the produce of Indian dominion,) after de-

ducting the imperceptible and enormous drain of ſpecie made by ſmuggling, doth not at this day perhapsamount to 800,000l. The difference then betwixt her numerical ſpecie diſburſement and receipt in balance of trade, muſt needs have been made good from ſome other fund than the circulating ſtock of ſpecie, otherwiſe circulation muſt in that number of years have totally ceaſed. And this fund we need not mention to have been the dominion in India. Ever ſince 1757, the private fortunes acquired there in conſequence of dominion or conqueſt, having been remitted either in bills on foreign Indian companies, or in diamonds, have created an annual influx of ſpecie, (or what is equivalent,) to the amount of at leaſt 700,000 l. * The Company

* As it is impoſſible to exactly aſcertain the annual amount of this private remittance made through various channels, it will no doubt be alledged, that we have exaggerated this article; and yet we have certain ground to affirm, that it is greatly underrated. Sure I am, if we can ſuppoſe that the amount of ſuch remittance made from 1757 to 1770 hath been in any degree equal to that of the two following years, (which is aſcertained,) and we have no reaſon to ſuppoſe that there hath been any conſiderable difference, the

pany too received ſince that period, and previous to the Dewanny, though by virtue of dominion or conqueſt, ſundry large ſums of money; which ſhe inveſted in merchandize; and, thereby, ſaved to Britain ſo much ſpecie as ſhe would, otherwiſe, have tranſmitted for the purchaſe of ſuch merchandize; and it doth not require demonſtration to prove, that all ſuch ſaving is, in every reſpect, the ſame as the influx

the ſum aſſigned by us will be greatly under mark. For no ſooner did the Engliſh Company, in 1770, open her treaſury, to receive money for remittance to Britain, than there was poured in at her three capital ſettlements above 1,400,000 l. for which bills were granted, preſented, and accepted by the Company, and nearly two thirds of this ſum was borrowed in Bengal. And in 1771 ſhe hath borrowed in Bengal alone, under the promiſe of remittance, a ſum perhaps exceeding the whole loan of the former year; though the bills have been poſtponed by her agents in Bengal, on account of the Company's inability to anſwer them. Such was the remittance of Britiſh private fortunes for theſe two years, through the channel of the Engliſh Company alone: and we have good reaſon to ſuppoſe, that there may have been ſome made through other channels. And theſe enormous ſums, borrowed by the Company, as ſovereign, for the expence of Bengal, in theſe two years, will ſerve to ſhow the mighty alteration of affairs in that country ſince 1765.

influx of an equal ſum. And ever from 1765, till ſome time in 1770, the Company paid for all her cargoes, not only in India but in China, with the ſurplus revenue of Bengal: and of courſe this ſurplus revenue hath, for that ſpace, ſaved, (which is the ſame as gained) annually to Britain, the whole ſums which the Company uſed to tranſmit for the purchaſe of her cargoes in India and China; and which, on an average, may be reckoned 500,000 l. *per annum:* but theſe cargoes were, from 1765, encreaſed to an enormous degree; and if we add only 200,000l. for ſuch encreaſe, we ſhall find that the ſurplus revenue of Bengal hath, by the return of trade, created an annual influx to Britain of at leaſt 700,000 l. in ſpecie: and this, added to the private fortunes, makes 1,400,000 l. received yearly by Britain, from Indian dominion.

But, for theſe two years paſt, the ruinous ſituation of thoſe countries, and the conſequent deficiency of revenue, hath obliged the Company to either tranſmit money from Europe, or otherwiſe to borrow money abroad, on bill or bond, for the purchaſe of all her cargoes in India as well

well as China: and the Company, by thus borrowing, for the purchaſe of cargoes, and even the expence of her government, hath abſorbed the private fortunes, which, till then, had been tranſmitted to Britain, by bills on foreign companies. We muſt therefore perceive, without deſcending to tedious inveſtigation, that the ruined ſtate of thoſe countries, having cut off ſurplus revenue, hath, for theſe two years paſt, diminiſhed the annual influx to Britain from Indian dominion, at leaſt one half, or 700,000 l. And this diminution of influx, whilſt our drain continues the ſame, we already begin to feel in our circulation: though this felt effect is not yet traced up to its cauſe. Of what mighty importance then muſt this Indian dominion have been, to the circulation of Britain: when this circulation feels ſeverely, from only two years partial deprivation of the benefit formerly derived from that dominion? And what effect muſt a total deprivation of that benefit operate, in a few years, on this circulation; whilſt, we are continuing to pay to our foreign creditors about 1,500,000 l. *per annum* in numerical ſpecie; excluſive of other leſs noted

noted drains, which, it is moſt probable mount it up much higher? And yet it is evident, that Britain muſt, unavoidably, be deprived of this whole benefit, ſo ſoon as ſhe ſhall loſe her dominion in India; whether that loſs ſhall be cauſed by enemies, or by the ruin of the countries ſubjected. Nay, by loſing the dominion of Bengal ſingly, ſhe muſt not only incur a deprivation of almoſt the whole dominion benefit; but ſhe muſt likewiſe loſe by far the moſt valuable part of that commerce, which was carried on by the Company with thoſe countries, previous to dominion. For the commerce with Bengal, alone, is of much greater value, than that with all the reſt of India: and, as to the trade with China, it is the moſt pernicious and loſing trade to the nation; however convenient it may be to government.

And if we ſhall then advert to the benefit and ſupport which the finances of Britain have received from this Indian dominion, for ſo many years paſt, though under the moſt prepoſterous management; but, ſtill more, if we ſhall advert to the nature and degree of benefit that, under proper management, might have been derived

derived *in perpetuum* from this Indian dominion, in not only the article of finance, but in other weighty reſpects: and, if we ſhall, yet farther, look forward to the diſmal conſequences that muſt unavoidably enſue to Britain, in theſe ſeveral reſpects, from a deprivation of this Indian dominion and its benefits; can we tamely ſurrender our reaſon to the *ipſe dixit* of men who are hardy enough to tell us, that Indian dominion is of no value nor utility to Britain.

Nor do theſe men leſs abuſe our underſtanding, by holding forth the difficulty of maintaining and defending this dominion: ſeeing that, of all nations in the world, Britain is, by a variety of circumſtances, the beſt qualified to maintain and defend maritime or commercial dominion in India. For, as ſhe exceeds all the world in naval force, ſhe is, through that circumſtance alone, the moſt capable of defending ſuch dominion, againſt the aſſault of European enemies: and had Britain availed herſelf of evident advantages, had ſhe eſtabliſhed her naval and land defence upon the plan that ſhall be explained, Britiſh dominion in India might, at this day, have been ſecured from even the attempt of

European rivals: they might have admired and envied, but they would not have dared to attack. And theſe European rivals are the only dangerous enemies to Britiſh dominion in India: for as to the neighbouring native powers, they would, from fear as well as inclination, have been amicable to Britain; provided her government in thoſe countries had acted with common honeſty, and common decorum, or prudence; and not as common robbers. And, as to the unhappy native ſubjects themſelves, their loyalty hath been ſufficiently proved, by ſo many years patient ſubmiſſion to the moſt intolerable of all poſſible governments. Wherein then conſiſts the difficulty of maintaining and defending Britiſh dominion in India?

And with regard to the ſo much talked of expence or drain of native ſtrength, we may ſurely, with good reaſon, ſay that this objection militated much ſtronger againſt maintaining that dominion under the Company, than under national government: tho' the nature and extent of even that drain under the Company, is moſt groſsly miſrepreſented. For I am well informed that the Company's annual recruit, ſince the time ſhe completed her dominion force,

hath

hath never exceeded 1200 men; and I am afraid it hath in general fallen ſhort of 1000; notwithſtanding ſhe laboured under many diſadvantages, from which national government would be exempted: ſuch as being obliged to put up with very indifferent and unhealthy recruits, for want of better; too little attention paid to the manner of tranſporting them; and ſtill leſs to their health and manner of living in the country: whilſt her governors expended numbers of them on unneceſſary predatory wars. And even this recruit we are not to reckon a drain of real ſtrength from Britain: ſeeing that the Company's recruits have been moſtly fellows of the moſt deſperate circumſtances, who had no means of ſubſiſting at home; and who therefore would, if the Company had not taken them off, have been taken off by the gallows, or otherwiſe would have emigrated to America or ſome other country, in ſearch of bread; and would thus have been equally loſt to Britain. So that, upon rationally conſidering this matter, we ſhall find that, for the maintenance of dominion in India, the Company hath not drained this country, of 100 men annually,

nually, that could, in any ſenſe, be termed uſeful, or a real ſtrength to it. But, ſetting aſide the precedent of the Company, it is certain that, to maintain and defend the mighty dominion of Bengal, demands an European force very little ſuperior in number to the garriſon of that barren fortreſs Gibraltar: and to maintain and defend the whole territorial poſſeſſions, together with the commerce of Britain in India, requires a force very little exceeding the aforeſaid garriſon with that of its ſiſter fortreſs in Minorca. And the annual recruit, neceſſary to keep up this force, after allowing largely for climate, and every other circumſtance, would, on a complete plan of defence, not exceed 900 or at moſt 1000 men: and, of this recruit, at leaſt 200, would be wanted annually to maintain commerce, if there was no dominion. Nay, if this is judged too great a drain for Britain, one fourth part of that number may be reduced, by recruiting that proportion of foreign proteſtants: ſuch being eaſily procured; and, in ſuch a low proportion, they can in no reſpect be dangerous. And can Britain regard 6 or 700 men annually as too great

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a drain, for the maintenance of that important dominion and commerce, which is as one of the capital limbs of her body; and at ſame time beſtow a nearly equal ſhare of her ſtrength on maintaining theſe two barren, and I had almoſt ſaid uſeleſs, fortreſſes; the pecuniary charge of which ſhe pays out of her proper finance, never to return; whilſt Indian dominion defrays its own charge.

The only remaining objection then to Indian dominion is, the difficulty of properly governing it. But this difficulty doth not ariſe, like that in America, from the indomitably obſtinate ſpirit of the ſubjects; on the contrary, it ariſes from their over paſſive or ſubmiſſive diſpoſition, and incapacity of reſiſting the power of government: and this, inſtead of being an objection, is the moſt valuable qualification of a dependent dominion. To remove this difficulty demands no exterior aids, no exertion of powers or force; it depends entirely on the will of the ſovereign; and a very little art, a very little care, with a little honeſty, would ſerve to completely remedy it; as we doubt not to evince.

In

In fine, Bengal, being one of the richeſt commercial countries is, to Britain as a commercial nation, the nobleſt and moſt truly valuable acquiſition that providence could poſſibly beſtow on her: by the mild diſpoſition of its inhabitants it is the moſt facily governed and maintained; and, by the nature of its ſituation, it is the moſt defenſible foreign dominion on this globe; particularly to Britain which excels in naval force. And one may almoſt venture to ſay that providence, by throwing Bengal into the arms of Britain, ſeems to have intended that this, the richeſt commercial ſtate in Aſia, which, through the effeminacy of its inhabitants, is incapable of maintaining its own independance, ſhould be ſubjected to Britain, as being the fitteſt, through ſimilarity of commercial diſpoſition, intereſt, and modes, to properly govern it; and, through her ſuperiority in naval force, the beſt qualified to defend and protect it from all enemies.

In what light then muſt poſterity regard the policy of Britain, during the third quarter of the eighteenth century: when it ſhall find her, in the Eaſt,

ſlighting

ſlighting and giving up that glorious field, which annually yielded a golden crop, to be rutted up and trodden down by hogs and viler beaſts: whilſt, in the Weſt, ſhe was tugging with all her might, exerting her utmoſt ſtudy, care and attention, much ſtrength, and more money, on cultivating the ſea ſands; ſtraining to ſubdue nature; and forcing the horſe to drink in ſpite of inclination? Will it not be ſaid, that ſhe would have acted a far wiſer part, if ſhe had left nature and time to ſlowly operate in America, the effects which they will unavoidably produce, in ſpite of all her efforts; and had converted her care and attention, to properly govern, and maintain, that noble, rich, and grateful dependent dominion in India; which, upon ſuch terms, would have poured, into her publick treaſury, reſources, that would have ſerved to alleviate her burden of taxes; and, conſequently, to reduce the price of neceſſaries, of labour, and of manufactures; which, again, would have preſerved her commerce, not only with America, but with other countries; and would at ſame time have preſerved to her thouſands of induſtrious and uſeful ſubjects, who,

who, through want of employment, were forced to emigrate from her to America. And, by the ſame care and attention to the government and revenue of that Indian dominion, ſhe would have prevented the inundation of eaſtern profuſion and extravagance; which chiefly contributed to convert this formerly graniferous iſland, into a paſture for horſes of parade and ſtately pride; inſomuch that, inſtead of ſupplying her neighbours as formerly, with ſome hundred thouſand pounds worth of grain annually, ſhe could not feed the greatly reduced number of her own inhabitants; nor furniſh the means of living to the induſtrious agricultor, and peaſant; who, in ſearch of livelihood, fled from her to America; thereby debilitating her own beſt ſource of ſtrength, and prematurely accelerating the manhood of thoſe otherwiſe infant colonies.

Nevertheleſs there ſtill remains a poſſibility of retrieving this error in policy; or at leaſt of preventing a farther encreaſe of the evils that have ariſen from it; provided that, in the firſt place, this Indian dominion ſhall ſtill be in our poſſeſſion: and, in the ſecond place, that national

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government ſhall, by taking upon itſelf the charge of adminiſtring the government thereof, remedy that firſt and radical cauſe of evil and abuſe which hath exiſted under the Company's government: and ſhall, at ſame time, with honeſt and ſincere intention, ſpirit and activity, apply a proper remedy to that which hath been aſſigned as the ſecond cauſe of evil, and the nature of which remedy ſhall be explained in the ſequel. For, upon ſuch terms, there is no doubt that a regular ſyſtem of government may be eſtabliſhed in that dependent dominion; under which it may be reſtored to its priſtine proſperity, nay, it may be elevated to a ſtate ſtill more flouriſhing than it ever knew; and, in conſequence, to a capacity of yielding a ſtill ſuperior degree of benefit to Britain; and in a manner widely different, and truely ſalutary to her.

But I muſt again repeat, that it is vain to expect this reform of evils from the management of the Company; loaded as ſhe is with ſo many natural defects, which it is out of the power of art to remedy, otherwiſe than by conferring upon her the ſovereign government of Britain, along

with that of this dependent dominion. For the execution of theſe two ſovereign governments is, by the nature of things, inſeparable: it being morally impoſſible, that any power can execute the ſovereign government of thoſe Indian countries, as a dominion dependent upon Britain, unleſs that power ſhall poſſeſs the ſovereign execution of government in Britain.

However, it would be ſtill more vain to look for any good from that extravagant fancy of joining the Company, with government, in this ſovereign charge. What quota of powers, proper to her and wanting to government, can the Company contribute, to render her a neceſſary or uſeful aſſociate with government, in this ſovereign charge? I doubt not that the propoſer's intentions were good and honeſt: but his ſcheme would be ſo far from promoting his or any one good purpoſe, that it would produce the very oppoſite effects. For, inſtead of checking and contraſting, it would ſerve, in the firſt place, to furniſh, in the Directors and their governors, a convenient cloke of excuſe to miniſtry and its governors, with the nation; whilſt miniſtry and its governors would ſerve the Direc-

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tors and their governors a like good turn with the proprietors: they would mutually vouch for and ſcreen each other; neither would be reſponſible, and neither would act; and thus, between ſtools, &c. in the ſecond place, commercial deſpotiſm which, by ſeparating the Company from the powers of government and the conſequent jealouſy of privilege, muſt have been completely ſuppreſſed, would, under this double-headed monſter, flouriſh with redoubled vigour: the national governors would, by their connection with the Company's, become merchants as well as tyrants; and the Company's governors would, by their power in the government, continue tyrants as well as merchants: and thus the candle would burn at both ends. In the third place, the Company which, by being excluded from the powers of government, would have contributed ſo eſſentially in the nature of a middle ſtate to the eſtabliſhment of a regular political ſyſtem in thoſe countries, muſt, by being joined in the execution of government, entirely loſe that virtue: inſtead of ſupporting liberty, ſhe would join in promoting tyranny; and would ſtill continue a ruin-

ous peſt to thoſe countries. Indeed that ſtrange partnerſhip of Nation and Co. in this ſovereignty buſineſs, is a cure infinitely worſe than the diſeaſe.

In ſhort, there is no alternative: if Britain means to preſerve the poſſeſſion of that mighty benefit derived from dominion and commerce in India; if ſhe means to prevent the abſolute ruin of the Company, and her creditors; if ſhe hath any regard to the loud cry of oppreſſion ſent forth to her for a ſeries of years, by her numerous wretched ſubjects in thoſe countries; and means to ſave them from final deſtruction, ſhe muſt furniſh their government with a ſovereign, or head, properly qualified to adminiſter it: for this is the foundation, as well as the crowning of all good government; it is the center upon which the machine revolves, from which every line iſſues, and in which every line terminates; it is the *ſine qua non*, for without it no regular government can exiſt. And what proper ſovereign can Britain furniſh to that dependent dominion, unleſs it be her own ſovereign government?

We have ſhown that the nation and her ſupreme government are perfectly equal to the

the charge: to them there is not the ſmalleſt difficulty in ſupporting it. Neither is there the ſmalleſt difficulty to her executive government or miniſtry, provided it ſhall poſſeſs an ordinary ſhare of ſpirit, activity, or enterprize; and ſhall proceed with ſincere and upright intention. For, a regular form of government being once eſtabliſhed abroad, and a properly digeſted office or department formed at home, the buſineſs would go on with great ſmoothneſs and facility to miniſtry.

Nevertheleſs, as I have aſſumed the liberty of preſcribing in this important and almoſt deſperate caſe, I am ſorry, that a ſincere regard to the welfare of the patient ſhould compel me to add, (by way of concluding on this head,) that, unleſs miniſtry ſhall act upon a principle, and with a ſpirit, extremely different from that which it hath hitherto diſcovered in this buſineſs, it would be much more adviſeable to continue the charge in the hands of the Company: for it can be but ruined under her. However, in ſtrong hopes of a melioration in theſe reſpects, which depends altogether on the will of government, I ſhall proceed

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to diſcloſe that plan, which, in the hands of a properly qualified ſovereign, would, I doubt not, ſerve to eſtabliſh a regular ſyſtem of government in India.

A PLAN,

FOR

ESTABLISHING A REGULAR SYSTEM

OF

POLITICAL GOVERNMENT

IN

INDIA.

WE have before obſerved, that the ſecond cauſe why theſe reſtraining and impelling powers, which alone can prevent tyranny and anarchy, have been altogether wanting in the Company's ſyſtem of government, appears to be the diſtance of ſituation, betwixt the ſovereign reſidence and the country governed. And we ſhall here add that, if national government ſhould adopt the ſame ſyſtem, this diſtance

diſtance would operate, under it, effects the ſame in nature as theſe under the Company; and nothing but the difference in other circumſtances, betwixt the national government and Company, could prevent theſe effects from being likewiſe equal in degree. For it is evident that, if the executive government of the nation ſhould, as the Directors have done, preſerve to itſelf the charge and power of immediately ſuperintending and controuling the execution of government in that Indian dominion, the diſtance of ſituation would create to that government an equal impoſſibility of adviſing and directing meaſures, of enforcing the execution or obſervance of orders, and of preventing or reſtraining abuſe: conſequently, in the immediate execution of all meaſures, the national governors would poſſeſs the ſame unlimited power, as the Company's governors have done. And the only advantage to that Indian government, from national governments aſſuming from the Company the charge of adminiſtring it, would ariſe from the following circumſtances. Firſt, the ſuperior retroſpective or *ex poſt facto* authority of national government, enabling it to judge and puniſh

hiſh the maladminiſtration, or diſobedience of its miniſters. Second, The ſuperior inclination or diſpoſition of national government (ariſing from its perpetual intereſt in the property) to exert itſelf in promoting proper meaſures. Third, The ſuppreſſion of commercial deſpotiſm. And fourth, The exiſtence of the Company as a middle ſtate betwixt the natives and their foreign government. All which innovations, ariſing from national government's taking upon itſelf the adminiſtration of this Indian government, though they are indiſpenſably neceſſary and highly conducive to the eſtabliſhment of a regular political ſyſtem, yet do we perceive that they, ſingly and unſupported, cannot ſuffice to create that due proportion of reſtraint on the power, or of impulſe on the will of the deputed executive government, which is abſolutely neceſſary to the perfect ſuppreſſion of tyranny, anarchy, and abuſe. Nor is it poſſible to complete this reſtraint and impulſe, to that ſufficing degree, unleſs by a proper exertion of the ſovereign's own ſupreme influence.

But we find that, upon the Company's ſyſtem, the diſtance of ſituation renders the

the influence of the ſovereign altogether impotent to this effect: and if we ſhould take it for granted that her ſyſtem hath been juſt or complete, then muſt we conclude, that this ſovereign impotence is a conſequence naturally and unavoidably ariſing from the diſtance; and, therefore, above the remedy of art. But, if we conſult our own reaſon, we ſhall perceive that the Company's impotence, in that particular reſpect, proceeded from a radical defect or error in her ſyſtem; which might have been remedied by art. For, it is evident, that the diſtance of ſituation was in every circumſtance ſimilarly and equally obſtructive to the Company's immediately or perſonally executing the government of that Indian dominion, as it was to her immediately reſtraining or enforcing the manner of execution: and yet we find that the Directors could diſcover a remedy for the firſt of theſe obſtructions, by the ſuccedaneum of appointing a deputed executive government. And, as the ſecond ſprung from the ſame cauſe, and was exactly ſimilar in its nature, common ſenſe muſt ſurely have inſtructed her, that it was to be removed by a ſimilar re-

medy: it being certain that, if the Directors had thought proper to inſtitute in India a deputation properly qualified to controul their executive deputation, the meaſures of thoſe Indian governments might have been enforced or reſtrained by the ſovereign reſiding in Europe, as effectually as they have been executed by the ſame ſovereign: that is to ſay, as effectually, as the defective conſtitution of the Company, (which equally diſqualified her for controuling as for executing,) could admit.

But it could not be ignorance, or want of common ſenſe, that prevented the Directors from inſtituting a controuling deputation of this nature: ſeeing they had before them the precedent of theſe other European nations, who hold any poſſeſſions in India: all of whom have provided ſomething of this kind: for inſtance, the Dutch government at Batavia. Sound policy quickly pointed out to the Dutch, the abſurdity of committing the charge of their diſperſed concerns in India, to a multiplicity of diſtinct heads, all acting under no other conſtraint, or reſtraint, than that of the Company's Directors reſiding in Europe.

Europe. Therefore, ſo ſoon as the Dutch Company began to extend her poſſeſſions in India, ſhe inſtituted one ſupreme government at Batavia, with full powers, and authority, to direct and controul the executive government of all her other ſettlements. And this government acts in India as an intermediate power, betwixt the Company reſiding in Europe, and her various poſſeſſions in that diſtant country; and as the perpetual reſidentiary ſupervifor of all her intereſts there. The Directors communicate all their purpoſes immediately to it: and it diſperſes orders and inſtructions to all the ſubordinate governments; which again tranſmit to it a regular account of their ſituation, wants, or tranſactions. All governors, chiefs, &c. are immediately reſponſible to it: all appointments to, and removals from, office in the ſuborninates, are made immediately by it: and all complaints or appeals, againſt the miſconduct or injuſtice of theſe governors, are immediately addreſſed to it. In fine, it may be termed the center of the Dutch government in India. And though this government can in no ſhape be termed the complete model of a deputation, fit

to controul or enforce the execution of ſovereign government, in various territorial dominions; yet, to this inſtitution, defective as it is, the Dutch owe it, that the government of their numerous ſubordinate poſſeſſions in India hath been conducted, for about two hundred years, clear of any enormous abuſe.

But if the Dutch and other European nations, which hold little other concern in India than a few ſettlements eſtabliſhed there for the purpoſe of commerce, found it neceſſary, for the regular management of theſe commercial concerns, to inſtitute a ſort of intermediate ſupreme power, as a local check on the reſt of their ſettlements: how much more incumbent was it on the Engliſh Company, to conſtitute an immediate directing and controuling power, over the conduct of her deputies, who were entruſted with the charge of executing the ſovereign government, of ſundry mighty ſtates; a charge of ſuch ſuperior intricacy, weight, importance, and delicacy; and ſo very liable to be abuſed.

What may have been the motive of the Directors for thus wilfully omitting an inſtitution

ſtitution ſo evidently uſeful and neceſſary, I ſhall not pretend to determine. Poſſibly they might apprehend that if, upon their acquiring this mighty ſovereign dominion, they ſhould alter that which had been all along their commercial ſyſtem, ſuch alteration might induce the nation to enquire into the cauſe of it, and ſo diſcover the nature of their dominion, which they have ever carefully hid from the public. Though, it is more probable, they might perceive, that the inſtitution of ſuch an intermediate power would greatly interfere with their own perſonal influence, power, and emoluments; ſeeing it muſt have poſſeſſed the immediate diſpoſal of places and poſts, as well as a conſiderable ſhare in the direction of affairs: and, in order to prevent this, they preſerved to themſelves the power, of immediately ſuperintending, and directing, the execution of government in thoſe Indian dominions.

But whatever the motive of the Directors may have been, it is certain, that the want of a deputed controuling power in India, hath been a radical and grievous defect in their ſyſtem: which hath produced

duced a number of thoſe evils that have been falſely aſcribed to the diſtance of ſituation. And though we are far from alledging, that it was poſſible for the Company to eſtabliſh in thoſe countries a government in any degree regular, ſeeing that the numerous natural defects in her conſtitution, unavoidably producing many deſtructive abuſes, muſt have ever proved an inſuperable obſtacle to that, yet do we affirm that, the inſtitution of a duly qualified intermediate controuling power, would have totally prevented ſome, and would have greatly diminiſhed moſt, of theſe enormous abuſes which, upon the ſyſtem of the Directors, have ſerved to ruin thoſe countries.

Now we have ſeen that the national government would, by taking upon itſelf the charge of adminiſtring that Indian government, remedy or ſuppreſs all the abuſes that have ſprung from the defective conſtitution of the Company, (beſides creating other circumſtances of high utility, that could not exiſt under the Company's government.) And as the diſtance of ſituation, preventing the ſovereign from immediately exerting his ſupreme influence

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over the deputed executive government, is the only remaining cauſe of evil or abuſe; it is plain that, if it is poſſible to conſtruct in India, a deputed power, upon ſuch principles, as that it ſhall effectually and completely ſupply the place of the ſovereign, in immediately directing, enforcing, and controuling the meaſures of the deputed executive government, then muſt the only obſtruction to the eſtabliſhment of a regular political ſyſtem, be remedied and removed. Conſequently the grand *deſideratum*, the only thing that is wanting, to enable the national government of Britain to regularly adminiſter the government of thoſe Indian dominions, is the inſtitution of a deputed controuling power in India, properly qualified to fulfil the purpoſes that have been here ſpecified.

And that it is poſſible, to conſtitute an intermediate power in India, that ſhall effectually and faithfully direct, enforce, and controul the meaſures of the deputed executive government in thoſe Indian dominions, I doubt not to evince: though, at ſame time, I am fully ſenſible of the many real difficulties, ariſing from nature

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and circumſtance, to obſtruct it; as likewiſe of the many artificial difficulties proceeding from the endeavours of thoſe who have an intereſt to obſtruct ſuch a meaſure; and who have influence to enforce their objections, however futile, on the underſtanding of others.

But before we proceed to deſcribe the plan upon which we mean to conſtruct this controuling deputation, it will be neceſſary to explain the extent of its charge, or number of the government's compoſing that dominion which it is meant to controul. For tho', in our deſcription of the Company's government in India, we confined our account to that of Bengal alone, as being the moſt important and beſt known part of her dominion; yet doth the Company poſſeſs, beſides Bengal, certain other territorial governments, of no ſmall value and importance, in reſpect of either revenue or commerce. All which governments being formed upon the ſame ſyſtem as that of Bengal, do not leſs demand reform, ſupervifion, and controul.

For, in the firſt place, the government of Madraſs poſſeſſes a very conſiderable

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and valuable territorial dominion, avowedly in the name and right of the Company. This ſame government doth likewiſe, in every thing beſide the name, poſſeſs the abſolute ſovereignty of that rich commercial province of Arcot, or the Carnatic, in which it is ſituated: for, notwithſtanding it tolerates a nominal Nabob, whoſe name it uſes in moſt acts of government; and who, conſequently, for the Company's convenience, poſſeſſes the ſhadow of ſovereignty; yet, as the government of Madraſs holds the charge of defending the country, and maintains the military force requiſite thereto, it is the actual ſovereign: ſeeing that, in all Indian or Aſiatic governments, he who holds the ſword muſt be the abſolute lord and maſter. And, notwithſtanding all the Company's parade of appearances, this Nabob of Arcot is, in reſpect of ſovereign power, as much a pageant as he of Bengal: a mere ſcreen or blind, placed before the Company's ſovereignty.

Bombay is likewiſe embarked in dominion, ſince it ſeized on the rich commercial city of Surat, with its diſtrict, &c. Though ſound policy muſt direct Britain

to reprobate all territorial dominion on that ſide of the peninſula; as cauſing a dangerous diviſion and weakening of her force and defence.

But the ſame policy will inſtruct Britain to regard dominion on the eaſt ſide of that peninſula in an oppoſite light; becauſe, on that ſide lay all the truly valuable dominions which ſhe already poſſeſſes.

To fully explain what is the true intereſt of Britain, reſpecting territorial dominion in India, would be, here, foreign and tedious; and, to ſlightly touch on that ſubject, might afford ground for cenſure and criticiſm: we ſhall only obſerve, in the general, that Britain ought to value only ſuch dominion in India as is maritime: becauſe, in the firſt place, theſe are ever trading and manufacturing countries; and, as ſuch, are highly uſeful to her proper commerce; they are likewiſe capacitated, by their own active foreign trade, to richly reimburſe her for her expence of native ſtrength in defending them, as well as for her trouble in governing them: and, in the ſecond place, being acceſſible to her naval force, they are eaſily maintained and defended by her. Therefore, ſo much

of this maritime dominion as ſhe can maintain and defend, without creating any additional expence of native ſtrength; and, upon a footing ſo connected with that truly valuable dominion which ſhe already poſſeſſes, as not to cauſe any dangerous diviſion of that original ſtrength, ſo much of this maritime dominion in India may be truly uſeful and advantageous to her; on any other terms it may be detrimental.

Such is the preſent ſtate of Britiſh dominion in India: and ſuch is the intereſt of Britain, with reſpect to future augmentation of dominion in that country. And we have undertaken to plan the conſtruction of an intermediate power or deputation, which, under the national government of Britain, ſhall effectually and faithfully ſuperintend, enforce, and controul the meaſures of theſe ſeveral governments that, at preſent are, or in future may be, ſubjected to Britain: and which deputation ſhall of courſe, in the firſt place, enable the national government of Britain to eſtabliſh a regular ſyſtem of political government over this whole preſent or future dominion: and, in the ſecond place, ſhall conſtitute a complete ſyſtem of

military government, and ſecure defence, for all the ſeveral branches of this dominion. At preſent we are on the ſubject of political government.

The properties requiſite to qualify this intermediate power, or deputation, for effectually ſuperintending, enforcing, and controuling the political government of dominion in India, are, firſt, virtue and integrity, to faithfully and honeſtly diſcharge the duties of its office: and, ſecond, power or ability, to effectually fulfil the purpoſe of its inſtitution. The latter is more eaſily conferred; but the former is rendered difficult, by ſundry obſtructions, ariſing from the nature or diſpoſition of the perſons who muſt neceſſarily be employed to compoſe this deputation. For it is needleſs to obſerve, that this controuling power cannot be lodged in the ſubjects native of the dependent dominion; the nature of the government, as well as the nature of their diſpoſition, rendering that impracticable; (as hath been ſhewn): otherwiſe this difficulty might be more eaſily ſurmounted. But, the Indian ſubjects being ſet aſide, there remains no choice; this controuling deputation muſt,

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per force, be compoſed of Britiſh born ſubjects: whilſt the ſeveral governments, which it is meant to controul, are at ſame time executed by Britiſh born ſubjects. And, from this circumſtance, it follows, that the perſonal intereſt of the party controuling muſt naturally be the very ſame, with that of the party controuled: and, of courſe, the views of both muſt likewiſe be the ſame.

This ſimilarity or ſameneſs of perſonal intereſt and views it is that creates the difficulty of conferring virtue, integrity, honour, and fidelity, on the controuling deputation. For it is morally certain, that the ſimilarity of intereſt and views will, naturally and invariably, draw the party controuling, to concur and join, inſtead of controuling or oppoſing, the meaſures of the party executing, (ſeeing ſuch meaſures tend to promote that which is their common intereſt) provided that this party controuling ſhall poſſeſs the power, and opportunity of ſo joining intereſt, with the party executing. And it is no leſs certain, that this controuling deputation muſt, unavoidably, poſſeſs the opportunity of thus joining intereſts, unleſs it can,

by

by ſome means, be prevented and reſtrained from joining and uniting the action of its own proper powers, with the action of theſe powers that are proper to the executive office. Whereas, if it ſhall be found poſſible to divide and ſeparate the action of theſe two different powers, the one from the other, in a manner ſo diſtinct, that each ſhall act, in the ſphere aſſigned to it, with freedom and liberty; and neither ſhall have the opportunity of tranſgreſſing the limits preſcribed, to its own proper department, by the ſovereign; then, and in ſuch caſe, it is not only poſſible, but certain, that this controuling deputation may, and will be, prevented from joining intereſts, with the executive deputation; and, conſequently, from promoting the very meaſures which it was meant to reſtrain. And, from thence I conclude, that the only poſſible and certain means of conferring, on this controuling deputation, virtue and integrity to faithfully and honeſtly diſcharge the duties of its office, is to cut it off from all opportunity of joining the powers of its office, with thoſe of the executive; or of aſſuming any ſhare in the executive government:

ment: in other words, it muſt be reſtrained from interfering, either directly or indirectly, perſonally or by proxy, in the immediate execution of meaſures, in any one of theſe governments which it is meant to controul.

But it is evident that, if this controuling deputation ſhall exiſt or reſide within any one of thoſe dominions whoſe government it is meant to controul, it will be morally impoſſible to prevent it from joining its powers, and, conſequently, its intereſts, views, and meaſures, with the deputed executive power of that government where it reſides. For, by virtue of its authority, which from the nature of its office muſt needs be ſupreme over the executive deputation, it will uſurp at leaſt a part if not the whole power of execution: or otherwiſe it will, by conſent, join and unite its powers with thoſe of the executive, in order to promote their mutual intereſt, by meaſures diametrically repugnant to the purpoſe of its inſtitution. Nor is it poſſible, in this caſe, by any art, device or ſeparation into parts, to prevent this uſurpation or union: let the controuling power be termed judges, ſuperviſors, officers

officers of the revenue, or what elſe; and let the office of controuling be divided, into as many parts as can be conceived; ſtill, the difference of term, will not alter the nature of the men employed; nor will the diviſion of parts ſeparate their intereſt. All the various perſons, compoſing this office, will ſtill be Europeans; the ſame as theſe who compoſe the executive office; and ſo, all the perſons in both offices will be foreign to the country governed, acting by an authority which is deputed mutable and temporary; conſequently they will all hold the ſame view; which is, to amaſs all the money they can during the ſhort term of their office, in order to tranſport it to their own country: and as all of them would, by virtue of their reſiding within the ſame government, poſſeſs the ſame powers, and the ſame opportunities of exerting them, they would all be irreſiſtably attracted, by the omnipotent ſympathy of ſelf-intereſt, to join their ſeveral powers, in promoting that which is the common view of one and all of them. In fine, if theſe controuling and executive deputations, which thus, from the community of the *natale ſolum*,

ſolum, hold one and the ſame intereſt, ſhall both reſide together in one and the ſame government, and thereby poſſeſs the ſame opportunities, it will be equally impoſſible to prevent theſe two deputations, however artfully ſeparated into parts, from joining and uniting their different powers, &c. as it is to preſerve ſeparate the guttæ of quickſilver; which, however gently and carefully they are dropt upon the ſame confined and ſmooth ſurface, will meet, join, and conglobate into one united maſs. But if the controuling deputation ſhall be thus permitted to join its powers with theſe of the executive, and conſequently forfeit its virtue and integrity, with reſpect to that one territorial government where it reſides, it thereby becomes diſqualified and unfit to controul the meaſures of any one other government: for the judge who is himſelf corrupt, is but little qualified to judge or puniſh corruption in others. I therefore conclude that, in order to preſerve the virtue and integrity of this controuling deputation, it is indiſpenſably neceſſary that it ſhould not reſide within the limits of any one of theſe territorial governments;

ments; theſe being the governments which it is meant to controul.

On the other hand, it is equally certain, that this controuling deputation cannot execute in perſon, or aſſume any perſonal ſhare in the execution of meaſures, in any one of thoſe governments where it doth not actually reſide; it being impoſſible that it can act perſonally where it is not perſonally preſent. It therefore follows that, by ſituating or placing this controuling deputation at a ſufficiently proper diſtance from all theſe ſeveral territorial governments, it may be prevented from aſſuming a perſonal ſhare in the immediate execution of meaſures in any one of them. And being thus, by the ſituation of its reſidence, cut off from all opportunity of acting perſonally, it may likewiſe be precluded from acting ſecondarily, or uſurping by proxy any influence, in the immediate execution of theſe governments, if it ſhall, after the manner of the Dutch government at Batavia, be ſtrictly prohibited from exerciſing its ſuperviſing authority any where without the limits of its own fixed reſidence; and from delegating or deputing its powers to any perſon or perſons,

ſons, its own members or others, who ſhall reſide, or may be beyond theſe preſcribed bounds. For though the ſyſtem of the Dutch government at Batavia is, in many reſpects, far too rude and unpoliſhed; yet is it, in this particular, moſt nicely circumſcribed: that government being reſtrained, in the moſt preciſe manner, from delegating and transferring its authority; or from deputing any power to examine into caſes, of even the moſt dubious nature, within the ſubordinates: but to obviate any inconvenience, that might otherwiſe ariſe from ſuch reſtraint, it hath a power to call before it, from the ſubordinates, all perſons or records neceſſary to information. For the Dutch were well aware, that the ſupreme government, if it ſhould be permitted to carry its ſuperviſing authority on any pretext into the ſubordinates, would gain an occaſion of interfering in the execution of thoſe meaſures which it was intended to controul.

We muſt then perceive, that this controuling deputation being ſeated at a properly ſufficient diſtance from all theſe territorial governments, and the exerciſe of its powers being expreſsly confined to that

particular ſeat of reſidence, it will, by ſuch means, be effectually reſtrained from interfering, in any ſhape, either directly or indirectly, in the execution of any one of thoſe governments which it is intended to controul. And we muſt farther perceive that, by virtue of ſuch effectual reſtraint, that clear ſeparation of office, which alone can prevent the junction or union of the powers, intereſts, and views of this controuling deputation with thoſe of the executive, will be completely accompliſhed. Seeing that, the action of the controuling power being ſtrictly confined within the limits of its own proper ſphere, the executive power muſt remain at full liberty to act diſtinctly and freely in the office aſſigned to it by the ſovereign.

The principal ſource of corruption, and grand ſtumbling block of virtue, being thus removed, the integrity of this controuling deputation may be eſtabliſhed on a firm and ſolid baſis, by ſkilfully dividing the parts which go to compoſe it: and, in particular, by clearly ſeparating the political and judicial powers: which, if they ſhall be judiciouſly divided into two diſtinct departments, mutually independent and unin-

uninfluenced, will, each of them, act as an effectual check, and powerful impulſe, on the other: ſo as to prevent either from abuſing its authority, or neglecting its duty. Whereas, if the political power ſhould, at ſame time, poſſeſs the power of judging, trying and determining, or ſhould even poſſeſs any influence over the judicature, there is danger that it might, on ſome occaſions, ſacrifice its duty to its intereſt. And this is the very capital error of the Dutch ſyſtem at Batavia, inaſmuch as that government, poſſeſſing the judicial power, hath thereby the opportunity of perverting juſtice, ſometimes to the prejudice of its conſtituent, and often to the detriment of its ſubordinates.

Nor would we be here underſtood to ſignify, by judicial power, a ſimple court of judicature, eſtabliſhed for the purpoſe of deciding litigated caſes of property; the judicial power here meant, muſt extend to every thing that reſpects a due execution of the juriſdiction and police, in the ſubordinate governments. Therefore its authority muſt not be paſſive, and confined to ſuch matter as ſhall come before it by complaint; but it muſt be active, aſſuming

ing cognizance of all public nuiſance, treſpaſs, or delinquency, that may be brought before it by information. For, here, juries may exiſt with great propriety and efficacy, ſeeing that the Company will, on account of her commerce, keep a number of ſervants at this ſupreme ſettlement; there will likewiſe be, no doubt, many free merchants (as they are termed): and, conſequently, there will never be wanting a choice of perſons unconnected with, and uninfluenced by the political government; and therefore fit to form a grand inqueſt; as well as petit or ſpecial juries, to decide in either criminal caſes, or diſputes of property. And this judicial power muſt farther be endued with all proper and neceſſary officers; particularly an attorney general: it muſt likewiſe be divided into diſtinct courts; reſembling, as nearly as circumſtances will admit, or occaſion requires, the courts of juſtice in the ſovereign country.

Nevertheleſs, we do not preſume to dictate or preſcribe the exact or complete form of this judicial power: we would only hint at the main purpoſes of its inſtitution; a due conſideration of which will readily ſuggeſt

ſuggeſt the particular form, to thoſe whoſe province it may be to conſtruct it. We ſhall only obſerve that, in order to confer a due weight on the judicial power, it is not ſufficient that it ſhould be independent, in its corporate capacity; the judges and officers compoſing it muſt, in their perſonal capacity, be placed as far as poſſible beyond the influence of the political power. The ſalaries annexed to their offices muſt be ſuch as will afford dignity, as well as independance: whilſt, on the other hand, they ſhall be debarred, under the ſevereſt penalties, from holding, either directly or indirectly, any place, poſt, emolument, or employment, of any nature, diſtinct from that of its own proper department. Moreover, the political power ſhould hold no voice in conferring the degrees of this department: that ſhould be veſted in the judicial power itſelf, with reference to the confirmation of the ſovereign.

This judicial power may be termed the ſupreme Court of Judicature, for the whole Britiſh dominion in India: to which all the ſubjects, under the ſeveral governments, whether natives or Europeans, may readily

readily appeal, againſt the oppreſſion of their governors, or the perverſion of juſtice: and, on which they may ſecurely depend for redreſs; provided it ſhall be placed above the influence of the political power. This ſupreme court of judicature would likewiſe be of inexpreſſible utility, as a check on the power, and an impulſe on the will, of the political branch.

We may add, that a judicious ſubdiviſion of the political power, into different departments, might contribute conſiderably to its virtue.

Theſe are the outlines of that meaſure, by which we propoſe to preſerve this controuling deputation free from corruption: and we doubt not but, upon this plan, when meliorated and improved by the ſuperior underſtanding of others, a controuling power may be conſtructed, which ſhall be completely qualified, in point of virtue and integrity, to faithfully and honourably ſuperintend, enforce, and controul the execution of political government in thoſe Indian dominions. And this is, by far, the moſt difficult, delicate, and important part of the undertaking.

For,

For, as to the power and ability, requiſite to qualify this deputation for effectually fulfilling the purpoſe of its inſtitution, that is readily beſtowed. The degree of power is altogether in the diſpoſal of the ſovereign. And, its efficacy or ability depends, principally, upon the choice of ſuch a ſituation for the ſeat of its reſidence, as ſhall enable it to keep up, at all ſeaſons, a ready and ſpeedy correſpondence with the ſeveral ſubordinate governments,

With regard to the choice of ſituation proper for the reſidence of this controuling power; (which is indeed a point of high importance,) we ſhall readily conceive, from adverting to its nature and the purpoſes of its inſtitution, that this reſidence ought to be ſome convenient ſea port; ſituated at a conſiderable diſtance from the limits of all theſe territorial governments; but, at ſame time, ſo centrically near to each, that the communication, to and from it, ſhall, in either monſoon, be not only practicable, but certain and ſpeedy. I ſhall reſerve the farther explanation of this intended ſeat of reſidence, till I come to treat of the military

ſyſtem; becauſe there are ſome properties, particularly requiſite to a proper centre of military defence: and it is propoſed that the ſame power, and conſequently the ſame reſidence, that ſuperintends the political government, ſhould likewiſe direct the military government and defence, of this dominion.

But this ſupreme controuling power being thus centrically ſituated, with reſpect to the ſeveral ſubordinates, as that it ſhall at all times hold a ready and ſpeedy correſpondence with each, will be thereby enabled to effectually ſuperintend, enforce, and controul the execution of political government in that whole dominion. For, in the firſt place, the ready and ſpeedy communication with all the ſubordinates, affording to the ſupreme power an opportunity of obtaining, from each, the moſt early intelligence of every tranſaction, incident, or occurrence; as likewiſe of immediately tranſmitting the orders and inſtructions, that may be ſuitable to the occaſion; will cut off from the ſeveral governors of the territorial dominions all pretext for acting diſcretionally. And, in conſequence, that deſpotic and arbitrary power,

power, which hath ſubſiſted under the Company's ſyſtem, will be completely ſuppreſſed. And, from adverting to this circumſtance, we ſhall perceive the importance of a proper choice of ſituation, for this ſupreme center of government.

In the ſecond place, this ready correſpondence with all the ſubordinate governments, enabling the ſupreme power to acquire a minute and complete knowledge of every circumſtance, reſpecting the ſtate and nature of the general police, in this whole dominion, will qualify it for originally planning, and for afterwards improving, all ſuch deſigns and meaſures as can contribute to the inſtitution of regularity and good order. It will likewiſe attain an intimate knowledge of the whole manoeuvre of finance, reſpecting the mode of collecting as well as appropriating the revenue and taxes: and it will be thereby enabled to project judicious forms, with different offices, as mutual checks upon each other, in that branch: which will ſerve to remedy that incredible extortion, rapine, and peculation: which, by ruining the farmer of the lands, hath almoſt totally ſuppreſſed agriculture, and greatly

depopulated thoſe miſerable countries; whilſt it hath grievouſly defrauded the ſovereign of his right. And all theſe planned modes, being approved and confirmed by the ſovereign, would be continued in vigorous and perpetual action, by the vicinity of the ſupreme political power: and all theſe ſeveral meaſures, being enacted into laws, the ſtrict obſervance of them would be effectually enforced by the ſame vicinity. And thus, that ſupreme power will, not only eſtabliſh, but perpetually conſerve a juſt regularity in police, and an exact oeconomy in finance.

In the third place, the ſupreme judicial power will, by its neighbourhood to theſe dependent dominions, acquire a juſt knowledge of the modes, cuſtoms, and diſpoſitions of the inhabitants; and, by that, it will be enabled to deviſe the beſt forms or offices, together with ſkilful rules for adminiſtring the juriſdiction, in a manner truly effectual, and at ſame time conſonant and agreeable to the humour of the ſubject. It will likewiſe be capable of afterwards improving and adding to theſe forms and rules, as future occaſion may require, or better information may ſuggeſt. All which

which forms or offices may, by the approbation of the ſovereign, be eſtabliſhed into ſtanding courts; and the rules enacted into laws. And a punctual obſervance of all theſe laws enacted, either for the regular adminiſtration of juſtice, or conſervance of the police, will be completely enforced, by the awe of this ſupreme tribunal: the communication with which, from all parts of that dependent dominion, being eaſy and ſpeedy, will afford a ready acceſs and opportunity to all the ſubjects, of preſenting their complaints, againſt any oppreſſion of their government, or denial, or perverſion of juſtice: whilſt the ſame ready communication will render the trial of all litigated caſes, ſpeedy and eaſy. A mighty innovation this, from the former mode of juſtice in thoſe dominions; when it was impoſſible for even Europeans to obtain redreſs, in our diſtant preciſe European courts, againſt the moſt glaring oppreſſion of government: and the natives were excluded from even that diſtant and deceitful proſpect of remedy.

And in order that the courſe of juſtice may be rendered thoroughly complete, it

may

may be enacted, after the manner of the Dutch, that no perſon, who hath held any office of power or truſt within the ſubordinates, ſhall depart immediately from thence for Europe; but ſhall be obliged to repair to the ſupreme reſidence; there to remain for three months; to the end that any perſon or perſons who may, by any means, have been reſtrained, during the exiſtence of his office, from preferring their complaint againſt him, on the ſcore of either public or private treſpaſs, may there have the free opportunity of proſecuting him.

The ſupreme political power ſhall immediately appoint to all offices, as well political as military, within the ſubordinate governments; with reference held to the future approbation, and confirmation, of the ſovereign: and it ſhall preſerve regular minutes of all ſuch appointments, orders, and other tranſactions made in its ſupreme capacity; which minutes, together with regular and properly vouched accounts of the collection, as well as the appropriation of the revenue, ſhall be punctually tranſmitted, by every occaſion, to the ſovereign. The judicial power

ſhall

ſhall likewiſe keep an exact regiſter of all trials, cauſes, and proceedings; more particularly thoſe of the grand inqueſt and aſſizes: this latter to be ſigned by all the judges and officers of the court, and atteſted by the foremen, with a majority of the juries: two copies of which ſhall be regularly tranſmitted to Britain; one to the ſovereign; and the other to the Company; which, as holding a material intereſt and ſhare in theſe law proceedings, hath a claim to ſuch participation of knowledge. All which minutes, accounts, and proceedings, being communicated to the ſovereign, will enable him to act as an ultimate check on the political government, the finance, and the juriſdiction of that Indian dominion.

Such is the form of this intermediate power, through which I propoſe to convey into the execution of government in thoſe diſtant Indian dominions, that plenary exertion of the ſovereign's reſtraining and compelling power, which, alone, can ſuffice to prevent tyranny and anarchy. And notwithſtanding the materials are, through hurry and want of time, rude, unpoliſhed and coarſely arranged, yet do I flatter myſelf,

ſelf, that candour will allow them to be ſolidly good, proper, and fully ſufficing to conſtruct, at leaſt, the groundplot, or baſis, of a regular political ſyſtem. Sure I am, the high propriety, nay the indiſpenſable neceſſity of ſuch a meaſure, muſt immediately ſtrike every perſon who employs his own judgment, however ſlightly, to conſider, firſt, the nature, intereſts, and views of the executive government in thoſe Indian dominions; as being foreign, deputed, mutable, and temporary. Second the timid, paſſive, and ſlaviſhly ſubmiſſive diſpoſition of the native ſubjects. And third, the diſtance of ſituation, betwixt the ſovereign reſidence, and the ſcene of government; which, rendering the immediate reſtraint and conſtraint of the ſovereign perfectly impotent, confers on this foreign executive deputation an unlimited and arbitrary power, of promoting its own perſonal views and intereſt, by meaſures, which tend to the intolerable oppreſſion of the wretched inhabitants, and the utter ruin of thoſe ſubjected countries; as well as to the mighty detriment of Britain's deareſt intereſt, and the blackeſt reproach

to

to her reputation. Nor can all this be remedied or prevented, but by ſuch a meaſure as is here propoſed.

And now we ſhall take a ſlight glance at the operation of this meaſure, on the juriſdiction, and police, of the ſubordinate dominions. And though, for the ſake of perſpicuity, we confine the view to Bengal alone, as being the moſt eminent part, yet will the effects be equally felt through the whole.

As to the fundamental eſtabliſhments of Governors, Councils, &c. theſe are ſufficiently obvious; as likewiſe are the proper chambers of revenue: and theſe, with the minutiæ appointments of inferior offices, will be more properly provided and improved, by the better judgment, true information, and future experience of the ſupreme controuling power. Here we mean to offer only one or two hints on the mode of juriſdiction and police.

And firſt, with regard to the courts of juſtice, I ſhould propoſe that the mayor's court at Culcutta ſhould ſtill ſubſiſt, as a court of equity for the whole country: and a moſt equitable court it is, if properly regulated: for the truth of which aſſer-

tion, I appeal to all thoſe who knew it previous to that alteration of the Company's charter of juſtice, which rendered it dependent on, and ſubſervient to, the Governor and Council: never was juſtice more exactly or more expeditiouſly adminiſtered, than it was by this court, previous to that alteration. In order therefore to reſtore it to its primitive utility, it ought to be reſtored to its original ſtate. Let the judges or aldermen, who at preſent compoſe it, continue ſuch: being ſervants to the Company, or free merchants, they muſt be unconnected with, and uninfluenced by the national government. And, in the caſe of death, or removal, the vacuum to be ſupplied by the court itſelf, from amongſt the Company's ſervants, or free merchants only: and if any alderman ſhall, ſubſequent to entering on his office, accept of any poſt or place under government, let that be an expreſs diſqualification and vacation of his office; which is to be immediately made good, by the choice of another perſon, properly qualified. The newly elected aldermen to be preſented, for acceptance, to the ſupreme

court

court of judicature only. And the officers of this court to be choſen by itſelf.

But as it would be impoſſible for the mayor's court to diſpatch all the buſineſs that might be brought before it, there ought likewiſe to be a court of law; conſiſting of a chief juſtice, with three judges; to be appointed by the ſovereign. And this court ſhould guide itſelf, by ſuch laws as may be enacted for the juriſdiction of thoſe countries; otherwiſe by equity.

Appeals from this court of law, as well as that of equity, to be made immediately to the ſupreme court of judicature; and from thence to his Majeſty in council.

If it is thought proper, there might be another mayor's court, of the ſame nature, eſtabliſhed at Coſſimbuzar, in the neighbourhood of the old capital, Maxadavad.

And as to the forms, for the more univerſal diſtribution of juſtice to the natives, theſe will be adjuſted by the ſupreme ſuperviſing power; as before mentioned. We ſhall only obſerve, that their courts of Zemindary and Cutchery are, as they ſtand at preſent, a grievous nuiſance.

But the nobleſt inſtitution for protecting the liberty and property of the ſubject, from the extortion and oppreſſion of their foreign government, and of its inferior train of native harpies, who are infinitely more rapacious than the Europeans, would be that of juries, properly conſtructed. Let the grand inqueſt of the country be held at Culcutta, four times in the year: and let the juries, both grand and petit, be expreſly compoſed of Company's ſervants, or free merchants, Europeans, and none others: the judges of law, or at leaſt two of them, to ſit on the aſſizes: the ſheriff to be choſen annually, from amongſt the Company's ſervants.

The powers of this grand inqueſt, if adapted to the ſituation of things, muſt be enlarged beyond theſe of our juries in Britain; where there are judicial and political aids, that muſt be wanting in thoſe countries: for inſtance, the enquiry muſt not be confined to place, but muſt extend every where through the country: it muſt likewiſe have authority to bring before it all manner of nuiſance or treſpaſs committed againſt the liberty or property of the ſubject, natives as well as Europeans.

And

And the judges ſhould have no power to reject or poſtpone the bills, found by the grand jury: but ſhould bring them on to deciſion, in turn, as preſented. Moreover, as the extent of enquiry may render it impoſſible for the more diſtant defendant to appear with his evidences, during the ſitting of that aſſize to which the bill hath been preſented againſt him; let ſummons be iſſued, upon the bill's being preſented, for ſuch diſtant defendant to appear at next aſſizes; or let ſome other method be found, either by means of the grand jury's meeting a ſufficient time before the commencement of trials, or by ſome extraordinary power veſted in the judges or ſheriff to produce ſuch diſtant defendant with his evidences in due time. And as this ſame extent of enquiry may, on the other hand, produce inconvenience to the ſubject, by affording occaſion to litigious perſons of diſtreſſing others, by bringing them from a great diſtance to theſe aſſizes, on frivolous or ill grounded complaints, it may be ordered that, where the cauſe ſhall appear to the court truly litigious, the plaintiff ſhall be bound over to ſtand ſuit at law, for damages to the defendant: and, one or two

examples,

examples, of this nature, will prove a barr to frivolous litigation.

And leaſt the judges ſhould, by any means, be influenced to act that part which the Company's governor and council commonly act, when they abſurdly preſide at theſe aſſizes, as his Majeſty's judges in their own cauſe; namely, to diſmiſs the Court, ſo ſoon as the grand jury ſhall find a bill that may be diſagreeable to them; it may be ordered that neither the judges, nor any officer of the Court, ſhall have power to adjourn the aſſizes, until all the trials ſhall be decided; or, otherwiſe, by the conſent of a majority in both juries.

The principal check however upon the conduct of theſe aſſizes, would be that of obliging the Court to keep exact regiſters, of all trials, and proceedings; ſigned and atteſted, as before mentioned. And if any part of either jury ſhall except to the authenticity of ſuch regiſter, which ſhall be publickly expoſed in the Court, then, ſuch diſſenting part ſhall have a right to proteſt, and aſſign its reaſons. Three copies of which regiſter, with proteſt, (if any,) ſhall be diſpatched, by the earlieſt occaſion, after each aſſize. One copy to the

the ſupreme Court of Judicature; which will, thereby, have the earlieſt notice of any abuſe; and, with the concurrence of the ſupreme political power, ſhall have the opportunity of immediately correcting it. A ſecond copy ſhall be tranſmitted to the ſovereign; who will act as an ulterior check on the ſupreme controuling power. And a third copy to the Company for the reaſons before ſpecified.

But, as this ſingle inqueſt at Calcutta cannot poſſibly carry juſtice to the extremes of that extenſive country, circulating aſſizes may be held, at leaſt once, or if poſſible twice a year, at Muxadavad as the center, and at Patnah as the northern extreme; two judges to go this northern circuit: and the other two judges to go on an eaſtern circuit, at Dacca. And, as there may not be a ſufficient number of Company's ſervants, properly qualified, to form complete juries at theſe northern and eaſtern aſſizes: I would propoſe that, to make up any ſuch deficiency, natives ſhould be mixed with the Europeans. Which mixture, if it ſhall be artfully tempered, in the following manner, would produce all the efficacy of entirely

tirely European juries; and, at ſame time, none of the bad effects, that might be apprehended, from an attempt to confer freedom and impartiality on juries entirely native.

Let, at leaſt, one half of both the grand and petit juries be Europeans; and the remaining part natives: and if it ſhould happen, that there cannot be collected, at the aſſize factory, and from the neighbouring inferior factories, ſo many Company's ſervants as ſhall make up half the uſual number of jurymen; then, let the whole number be diminiſhed, to the ſufficing half of Europeans. Let the unanimity of verdict, in ſuch mixt juries, be diſpenſed with; and let the majority of voices, in either jury, find the bill or verdict; as is the cuſtom in Scotland. And let an additional proviſion be made to the oath of the juryman, purporting that he ſhall not, on any account, diſcloſe the opinion given by any individual, in the jury room.

By this artful mixture, and theſe precautions, the native jurymen would be liberated from that ſlaviſh dread, of future revenge from their own countrymen employed

ployed under government; ſeeing it would be impoſſible, for theſe native officers of government, to diſcover the particular opinion of each individual; which, if the juries were entirely native, they would infallibly do, to the utter ruin of the poor native jurymen. So that the native Jurymen, acting thus with freedom, under the cloke and protection of the Europeans, would anſwer all the effectual purpoſes of Europeans. Whilſt, being ſenſible that they owed their freedom and impartiality, together with all the other benefits ariſing from juries, to their connection with the Europeans; this freedom conferred on them in the jury room, would not in the leaſt diminiſh their awe and deference to government. The proceedings at theſe circuit aſſizes to be regiſtered and tranſmitted in like manner as at Calcutta.

Theſe juries would prove the Magna Charta, the palladium, and true ſecurity of Indian liberty and property, againſt the deſpotiſm and extortion of their foreign government. And it evidently appears, that the virtue of theſe juries, (as being, at one and the ſame time, truly effectual to the ſubject, and perfectly ſafe to the

ſovereign,) entirely depends upon the circumſtance, of completely excluding the Company and her ſervants, from the ſmalleſt participation in the executive powers of government. But the efficacy of theſe juries, and of other inferior inſtitutions made through the ſupreme controuling power, being once felt and known, would ſpeedily induce the natives to purchaſe perpetual property in lands: ſeeing they would perceive themſelves thoroughly ſecured in the produce of thoſe lands. And this, being divulged abroad, would draw the inhabitants of the neighbouring countries to the ſtandard of Britain; together with their wealth, and induſtry. By which means the Britiſh dominion in India, which, at preſent is, through oppreſſion and conſequent famine, in a great meaſure deſerted and depopulated, would again be completely peopled and cultivated: arts, manufactures, and commerce would ſoon be reſtored to their former ſtate; nay, they would be extended to a degree far ſuperior: and theſe countries would, of courſe, be enabled to richly repay Britain for the bleſſings conferred by her, of perfect

fect ſecurity in liberty and property; bleſſings, never before known in India.

And all this may be effected by means of that intermediate ſupreme controuling power: which would, not only create, but preſerve, the full and vigorous efficacy of all theſe inſtitutions, in the ſubordinate dominions. Whereas, if it was even poſſible, (though indeed it is morally impoſſible,) to inſtitute, by any temporary means, all theſe powers, forms, rules, and regulations in thoſe dominions, yet is it evidently certain that, ſo ſoon as theſe temporary means were withdrawn, the virtue and efficacy of all theſe inſtitutions would immediately vaniſh, and be ſuppreſſed by the power of the executive government; which, from the nature of things, muſt unavoidably be, either deſpotic over the native ſubjects, or cannot exiſt at all.

But this ſame controuling power, as it would, on the one hand, by its fixed reſidence in the immediate neighbourhood, perpetually preſerve the action and motion of all theſe inſtitutions, like to a power ever preſent to wind up the ſprings of the machine; and, ſo, would check all the

bad effects of that naturally neceſſary deſpotiſm in executive government: ſo would it, on the other hand, effectually ſupport the power and authority of that executive government; and prevent its being encroached on, by an over exertion of the privileges conferred on the ſubject. For, on this ſide too, there is a danger; which will be readily comprehended, by thoſe who conſider the nature of government; and, at ſame time, the diſpoſition of human nature. But all danger, of preponderating either ſcale, would be prevented, by the vicinity of the controuling power: which, holding the balance in its hands, and nicely diminiſhing from one, or adding to the other ſcale, would ever preſerve a juſt equilibrium, betwixt the liberty of the ſubject, and the power of government.

Nor would the inſtitution of new regulations be the only means, in the hands of the controuling power, of preventing the dangerous over exertion of privilege: it would likewiſe poſſeſs the inſtantaneous power of ſeizing, or otherwiſe of ordering to its own reſidence, all ſuch perſons as ſhould prove over troubleſome, or dangerous

to the due authority of executive government. For, though it would be extremely abſurd to truſt a power of this nature, immediately in the hands of executive government; which would, infallibly, employ it to its own worſt purpoſes: yet might ſuch power be ſafely truſted to this controuling government; which could not have the ſame motives to abuſe it.

Nevertheleſs we do not mean that this, and all theſe other powers, ſhould be unlimitedly confided to this controuling deputation: we ſtill preſerve a check over it, in the national government. And a moſt effectual check too; by means of the beforementioned copies of regiſters, immediately tranſmitted to Britain, from the ſubordinates; as likewiſe by its own minutes, accounts, and regiſters.

So that here would be a regular gradation of effectual political checks. The privilege of juries, and other inſtitutions in the ſubordinate dominions, being preſerved in vigorous action, by the influence of the intermediate controuling power, would prove an effectual check on the deſpotiſm or extortion of executive government; and would thus completely ſecure the

the liberty and property of the ſubject, And the ſame influence of the controuling power would ſufficiently check the luxuriancy of privilege; and ſupport the power of government; thus preſerving an exact poiſe betwixt both. Whilſt the ſovereign, at a diſtance, could deliberately and effectually watch the hand that trimmed the ſcales.

And thus the inſtitution of this intermediate controuling and impelling power, would completely remove every obſtruction ariſing from the diſtance of ſituation: it would ſerve as an intermediate link of the political chain: or, as a bridge of communication, joining this dependent Indian dominion to the ſovereign country. But, all obſtruction ariſing from the diſtance of ſituation being thus removed, what difficulty can the national government of Britain find, in adminiſtring the political government of that Indian dominion? Upon this plan, that taſk appears to me more facil, leſs pregnant with difficulty, charge, or care, than it is to govern any one, the moſt pretty, of our foreign Colonies: nay it appears equally eaſy, as it is to govern the neighbouring Iſle of Man:

Man: ſeeing that the oppoſition of the ſubjects, to the authority of government in this Indian dominion, though they be ſo infinitely more numerous, is not greater than is the oppoſition of the few ſubjects in Man. The only difficulty, that could exiſt to national government, was that of duly tempering, or abating, the power of the deputed executive government: and it appears, that this may be completely effected by means of this intermediate controuling power; which, in the hands of the ſovereign, would act upon the government of this Indian dominion as the pegs or keys upon the ſtrings of a muſical inſtrument; of which one being gently ſtrained, and another properly relaxed, would create, and perpetually preſerve, a perfect harmony, or concord, in this political ſyſtem.

A PLAN,

FOR

ESTABLISHING A REGULAR SYSTEM

OF

MILITARY GOVERNMENT,

AND OF

SECURE DEFENCE,

IN

INDIA.

THE Company's ſyſtem of military government and defence in India is, at leaſt, equally defective, faulty, and abſurd; and, therefore, doth equally demand reformation, as doth her political ſyſtem. For the ſame cauſe that renders the power of the Company's ſeveral deputed governors perfectly arbitrary and diſcretional, in civil matters; namely, the Directors having preſerved to themſelves the charge of immediately directing and ſuperintending thoſe governments; confers, upon theſe deputed governors, a like arbitrary and diſcretional power, in military matters. And ſurely it is impoſſible to conceive any thing more ridiculouſly extravagant

vagant, than is this military ſyſtem of the Company; which affords to each governor, of four different capital ſettlements, the abſolute, independent, and diſcretional power, of applying the military force of his own government; and likewiſe of directing the meaſures of defence: whilſt, each, of theſe four governors, holds a particular intereſt of his own; which is, not only diſtinct from, but oppoſite to that of all the others.

Can it be ſuppoſed that four men, thus oppoſite in their perſonal views and intereſts, and thus independent of each other, ſhould heartily concur in general meaſures; or ſhould cordially unite in a ſyſtem of common defence? Common ſenſe informs us that they will not; and experience convinces us that they do not. For it hath been known that one, of theſe ſettlements, hath furniſhed arms and ammunition; and hath otherwiſe befriended a power, at open war with one of the others. And, in the caſe of any one of theſe ſettlements being attacked, the others are extremely backward in ſupporting it; becauſe each, of the four governors, giving the preference to his own particular

charge, in which his own perſonal intereſt is more immediately concerned, conſiders all communication of his force, to any of the other ſettlements, as a diminution of his own ſecurity, and even of his importance. So that, upon ſuch terms, the union betwixt theſe four diſtinct, and mutually independent, governments, can ſcarcely be termed federal.

Moreover, each of theſe four governors poſſeſſes, within the limits of his own government, the diſcretionary power of making war and peace. And, ſo, hath the opportunity, whenever it ſhall ſuit the purpoſe of his own perſonal intereſt, to pick a quarrel, and engage his government in war, with ſome one of the neighbouring native ſtates. Nor is this an imaginary evil; or a ſimple ſuppoſition of what may poſſibly happen; it is a real caſe; an abuſe that hath actually exiſted. For we can produce ſeveral inſtances where theſe governors, more particularly on the coaſt of Cormondel, have commenced, and induſtriouſly protracted, wars with the neighbouring ſtates, expreſsly for the purpoſe of plunder and peculation,

And,

And, from this diſcretionary power of peace and war lodged in the hands of theſe ſeveral governors, and the conſequent abuſe thereof, flow the following evils to the ſovereign. Firſt, the governor, thus warring, exhauſts and conſumes the treaſure of his conſtituent; to the end that he and his aſſociates, may gain occaſion to pocket a part. Second, by theſe offenſive wars, he waſtes and deſtroys that force, which was intended by the ſovereign for defence: and, thereby, expoſes his own charge, naked and defenceleſs, to the attack of other enemies. And third, by theſe wanton unneceſſary and unjuſt wars, he provokes the hatred and jealouſy of all the neighbouring ſtates; and, thus, converts into enemies, thoſe native powers, who would, otherwiſe, be amicable and friendly to the ſovereign.

To correct theſe, and many other abuſes of a like nature, which flow from this abſurd military ſyſtem of the Company, it is evidently and indiſpenſably neceſſary, that there ſhould be inſtituted, one ſupreme head of military government. Which, being veſted with the ſupreme power of making peace and war in India,

ſhall reſtrain theſe ſeveral territorial governors, from engaging in unneceſſary wars with their neighbours. And which, poſſeſſing the ſupreme direction of the common force, ſhall, in the caſe of particular or general danger, apply that force to the moſt proper and neceſſary purpoſes.

Now it is naturally proper, that the ſame intermediate ſupreme power, which ſuperintends the political government, ſhould likewiſe ſupremely ſuperintend the military government, and defence, of thoſe Indian dominions. And, for this latter purpoſe, the choice of a proper ſituation, for the reſidence of that ſupreme power, becomes likewiſe a point of moſt eſſential conſequence. For it is evident, on the one hand, that this military ſuperintending power ought not to exiſt in any one of theſe territorial governments; nay it ought not to reſide in the immediate neighbourhood of any one rich native ſtate; becauſe, in either of theſe two ſituations, it is liable to be tempted, by views of avarice or ambition, to apply the general force, to its own perſonal purpoſes; and, if ſo, the cure would be worſe than the diſeaſe: and, on the other hand, it is

no leſs evident, (from the reaſons aſſigned on the ſimilar head in the political ſyſtem) that this ſupreme military power ought to be ſituated ſo centrically near, to all the ſeveral territorial governments, as that it may, at all times and ſeaſons, be capable of keeping up a ready and ſpeedy correſpondence with each.

The diſtant and unconnected ſituation, of theſe four capital governments, is likewiſe a mighty obſtruction to a ſecure ſyſtem of defence. For, the wind, blowing in thoſe ſeas for ſix months from one quarter of the compaſs, and for the other ſix months from the oppoſite quarter, doth, alternately, cut off in a great meaſure all naval communication betwixt theſe four governments. For inſtance, during the violence of the ſouth weſt monſoon, that is, from the middle of April till the middle of July, it is almoſt impracticable for ſhips to paſs from Bengal to Madraſs: and, during the three more moderate months of that monſoon, this paſſage is difficult and tedious. And during the north eaſt monſoon, the paſſage is much the ſame from Madraſs to Bengal. But the communication betwixt Bombay, and theſe

two

two ſettlements, is ſtill more obſtructed. For Bombay, being ſituated in lat. 19 deg. north, on the weſt ſide of the peninſula of India, it is almoſt impoſſible, from the latter end of November till the middle of February, for ſhips from Bombay, bound for the Bay of Bengal, to round the iſland of Ceyloan: and, for the other three months of the north eaſt monſoon, they are obliged, in order to weather Ceyloan, to ſtand over to the eaſtward almoſt as far as Atchen head, and back again to the iſland; a run of about 20 degrees. From the end of April till Auguſt, it is almoſt impracticable for ſhips from the Bay and bound for Bombay, to round Ceyloan; and in the other three months of the ſouth weſt monſoon, that paſſage is difficult and tedious. And, even in the fair paſſage, the run betwixt Bengal and Bombay is ſeldom made in leſs than a month. Moreover, during the force of the ſouth weſt monſoon on the weſt ſide of the peninſula, that is, from the middle of May till the middle of Auguſt, it is extremely dangerous for ſhips to attempt running in for Bombay: the weather being then ſo extremely thick, that ſometimes a ſolar obſervation

ſervation cannot be obtained for ſeveral days together: and if a ſhip ſhould, in ſuch circumſtances, run in for the land, which in ſuch weather is not diſtinguiſhable at three leagues diſtance, and ſhould miſs the opening of the harbour, which is but ſmall, it is more than probable that ſhe would not be able to clear the ſhore, with the wind blowing fiercely right on, and rolling before it a heavy ſea. As to Bencolen, circumſtances are nearly the ſame with it, as betwixt Bengal and Madraſs.

Now it is evident, that this obſtructed naval communication, betwixt the four chief governments muſt, in many reſpects, greatly weaken the common defence: and muſt greatly augment, to the ſovereign, the charge, in both men and money, of maintaining and defending thoſe dominions and poſſeſſions. Seeing it muſt neceſſitate him to keep up, in each of thoſe governments, a force ſufficient to defend it againſt the whole united ſtrength of an offenſive enemy, without truſting to any aid from the others: becauſe, otherwiſe, he runs the riſk of loſing them all

ſingly,

ſingly, to a force that can overpower but one of them.

But all the danger, inconveniences, and extraordinary expence, ariſing from this obſtructed naval communication, may be obviated and removed, by eſtabliſhing one ſupreme center of military defence; ſo ſituated, with reſpect to the ſeveral parts of thoſe truly valuable territorial dominions, as that the communication betwixt it and them ſhall, in either monſoon, be not only practicable but ſpeedy and eaſy. For it is evident that, in ſuch a ſituation, this ſupreme center of defence could, at all times, receive ſpeedy notice of any impending danger, or actual attack; and that, upon ſuch notice, it could immediately tranſport its own garriſon, by ſea; as well as collect aid from the other ſettlements. So that the garriſon of this ſupreme center of defence would act as an army of obſervation; ever ready to pour in, at any quarter, on the back of an aggreſſive enemy. And, of courſe, ſuch a center of defence muſt connect, and unite, the ſtrength of all the ſeveral parts of Britiſh dominion in India.

Now

Now it appears that, the ſituation of reſidence, becomes a circumſtance, highly eſſential to the efficacy of each purpoſe, propoſed from this ſupreme intermediate power. And it farther appears that one, and the ſame, ſituation is required, for all theſe ſeveral purpoſes: ſeeing that, from a convenient naval port, ſituated at a proper diſtance from the limits of all the territorial governments; and, at ſame time, ſo centrically near to each, that the communication with all the ſeveral parts of dominion will be ſpeedy and eaſy; this ſupreme power would, in the firſt place, completely and effectually, faithfully and honourably ſuperintend, enforce, and controul the meaſures of political government, as well as the conduct of military government: and, in the ſecond place, it would unite and connect the general ſtrength of thoſe dominions, and completely ſecure the defence of the whole.

But, of the ſeveral ſettlements poſſeſſed by the Company in India, Bengal and Madraſs are evidently diſqualified for this ſeat of reſidence; not only becauſe the communication betwixt them and the other ſettlements is, at certain ſeaſons, altogether cut

off; but becauſe they are, themſelves, territorial governments; and therein, the very object to be controuled. Bencolen is, in every reſpect, out of the queſtion. And, there then remains only Bombay; which is ſo far poſſeſſed of the properties requiſite to this reſidence, in that it is, at preſent, not greatly embarked in territorial dominion; and is, likewiſe, a ſea port. But in reſpect of communication, with the truly valuable poſſeſſions of Britain in India, Bombay is altogether unfit to be either the reſidence of the ſupreme controuling power, or yet the center of defence; as muſt appear from the preceding deſcription; which was more particularly enlarged, for the expreſs purpoſe of evincing this. Far from being a proper center of defence, all the force that is lodged at Bombay becomes detached, and completely loſt to the defence of Britain's truly valuable poſſeſſions; at leaſt on any ſudden emergency. Indeed Bombay is, in every thing, reſpecting either dominion or commerce, a dead load, and uſeleſs ſettlement; ſaving it be for the ſole purpoſe of a naval port, or a place for refitting our ſquadrons.

But the choice of Bombay for a naval port, is the moſt dangerous and fatal error, in the whole abſurd ſyſtem of the Company's defence: ſeeing that, by this abſurd choice, Britain loſes the uſe of her naval force; which is her capital ſtrength of defence, againſt the attack of France, her only dangerous enemy in India—As will appear—It is impoſſible that ſhips, the beſt fitted from Europe, can ſubſiſt, in thoſe ſeas, for two years, without a thorough repair: and more particularly in time of war; when action hath happened, and is again expected. And this thorough repair they cannot obtain but in a naval port, properly filled with docks, or careening platforms. Bombay is the only naval port, thus fitted by Britain, in India; conſequently the ſquadron of Britain muſt retire, at leaſt every ſecond year, to Bombay, for repair. But the Britiſh ſquadron being once retired to Bombay, (as is common, in October,) which is ſituated in lat. 19 degrees north, on the weſt ſide of the peninſula; it is as effectually excluded, for five months, from the bay of Bengal, and more particularly from Bengal itſelf, as if it was ſtill in Europe. And,

during theſe five months, the enemy may either ſcour that Bay with ſingle cruizers, or ſhe may tranſport, and, without oppoſition, land a force in Bengal; and theſe ſaid five months are the very fitteſt in the whole year for land operations. This muſt be thoroughly underſtood by all thoſe who are acquainted with the navigation of thoſe ſeas: and could be here readily demonſtrated; was it not that, by publickly pointing out our own weakneſs, we ſhould point out to the enemy her ſtrength. It is moſt certain that, if France underſtands her own advantage, (and it is to be apprehended ſhe is but too well acquainted with it) ſhe may either waſte and conſume the Britiſh ſquadron, through preventing its repair; or otherwiſe ſhe may effect every purpoſe, againſt Bengal, nay againſt Madraſs, with as great ſecurity, as if there was no Britiſh ſquadron in India: ever ſo long as Britain ſhall continue her only naval port at Bombay. Nor is there any alternative. For as to that ridiculous notion, of carrying a ſquadron of large ſhips up the river of Bengal to repair, no commander in his ſenſes would, in the time of war, when he expected to be equally matched

matched by the enemy, ſo ſoon as the ſeaſon arrived, incur the riſk of loſing ſome of his ſhips, in the paſſage up and down that incredibly dangerous river; and ſtill leſs would he ſubject himſelf to the certainty of loſing half his hands, by that putrid unhealthy air at Culpee, or Ingelee. Neither would he be mad enough, in the while of a hot war, to uſe that dangerous expedient, of half repairing at Trincamalay; where he is liable to be ſurprized by an enemy, in the act of repairing. In fine, ſo long as Bombay continues to be our only naval port, our commanders muſt, of neceſſity, either waſte and loſe their ſquadron; or elſe they muſt retire to Bombay, at the leaſt, once in two years; and, thereby leave the ſeas, with all our valuable poſſeſſions in the Bay of Bengal, freely expoſed to the attack of an enemy, for five months.

It therefore follows that, if Britain means to avail herſelf of her naval force, which is the principal defence of her dominion and commerce in India, ſhe muſt eſtabliſh a proper naval port, on the eaſt ſide of the peninſula; becauſe, on that ſide lay all her truly valuable poſſeſſions, and

and commerce. And that port, which I mean to propoſe, is in every reſpect completely qualified for this purpoſe: though I cannot, in this publication, ſpecify the place; leſt the enemy ſhould anticipate, and take the advantage of our ſhameful neglect.

I am ſenſible it will be immediately exclaimed that we have already too many poſſeſſions in India; and that this is no time to increaſe our ſettlements there; and thereby to increaſe the drain of our native ſtrength, as well as the expence of treaſure.

But, to this, I anſwer, that this new eſtabliſhment would not encreaſe the number of our capital ſettlements in India: on the contrary, it would diminiſh it, from four to three: for it would ſuppreſs, in the firſt place, Bombay; which is in every reſpect a truly uſeleſs ſettlement; and would therefore be exchanged for this new ſettlement; which would ſerve to connect the whole ſtrength of this dominion; as well as to promote a variety of other very important purpoſes. In the ſecond place, Bencolen would be reduced to the degree of a ſubordinate, immediately under the direction

direction of the reſident at this new ſettlement; and completely ſecure under its protection.

As to the drain of native ſtrength, this eſtabliſhment would, inſtead of adding, conſiderably decreaſe it: for the garriſon, together with the artillery, &c. of Bombay, would be tranſported thither; as likewiſe would the better part of the garriſon at Bencolen: and theſe two garriſons, being placed there, would form an army of obſervation, for all our valuable poſſeſſions, as hath been deſcribed; conſequently the territorial governments would not demand that degree of force, which is requiſite at preſent, when each ſtands on its own bottom.

And with regard to the expence of treaſure, I ſhall only obſerve that, it is moſt unaccountably abſurd in Britain to ſend out to India, a ſquadron of 17 ſhips of the line, beſides frigates, (as ſhe did in laſt war,) for the protection of her dominion and commerce in that country; which ſquadrons become evidently unprofitable to that purpoſe, through the circumſtance of wanting a properly ſituated naval port; when leſs than a ſingle year's charge, of

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ſuch ſquadron, would ſuffice to completely fit up a naval port, ſo ſituated as that, from thence, her naval force would completely effect its intended purpoſe. For I affirm, that the port which I propoſe would be completely fitted up, in every reſpect, as a naval port, for leſs expence than one year's charge of ſuch ſquadron; ſeeing that I do not propoſe docks, but platforms for careening, as at Batavia; and theſe are prepared, in infinitely leſs time, and at much leſs charge than docks; whilſt they are far more convenient and expeditious for repairing large ſhips, than theſe docks at Bombay. And, as to the fortification immediately requiſite, it would be but little expenſive, and would demand but little time to rear it: becauſe it would be perfectly acceſſible to the ſhips; and ſo, whilſt it protected them, would be protected by them.

Moreover no part of the treaſure, expended on originally fitting this naval port, would come immediately out of Britain's proper treaſury; for the whole would be defrayed by the dependent dominion in India. And this new eſtabliſhment would, in a very little time, not only ſupport its

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own charge, but would richly reimburſe Britain for her original coſt. Seeing it would, in the firſt place, as a colony or ſettlement, yield her immediate treaſure, together with ſundry commodities peculiar to itſelf; and, in a little time, it would, under proper conduct, produce rich manufactures. In the ſecond place, it would, as an Emporium, (for which purpoſe it is perfectly adapted by its ſituation,) greatly improve the commerce of Britain in India: and as a centrical magazine or warehouſe, for the commodities of China as well as India, it would reduce the term of the Company's voyages to one year; and, thereby, reducing the expence of her carriage nearly one third, it would enable her to ſell cheaper; and conſequently advance her commerce in Europe. Likewiſe the Company's ſhips rendezvouſing and departing from this port for Europe, under proper convoy, this would ſecure her trade from that imminent danger to which it is expoſed, from her ſhips rendezvouſing ſingly, at that button of an iſland, St. Helena: a circumſtance that may, in the very firſt year of a French war, completely ruin this Company; as

that enemy is now perfectly acquainted with her route. Now Bombay is perfectly uſeleſs to all theſe, and indeed to every other purpoſe; as can be readily demonſtrated: and the whole benefit derived from it, as a colony or ſettlement, in the year, doth not ſuffice to defray one month's expence.

But this new eſtabliſhment, being once fitted up as a naval port, from whence the ſquadrons of Britain can, in either monſoon, command all her valuable poſſeſſions; this ſame eſtabliſhment would, at ſame time, completely ſuit for the reſidence of that ſupreme intermediately ſuperintending power. For this port is ſituated, at ſuch a diſtance from all the territorial governments, as would ſuffice to effectually prevent the controuling power, from interfering in the immediate execution of government. And, having ſaid that it is perfectly well ſituated for a naval port, it follows that the communication, betwixt it and all the parts of the Britiſh dominion in India, muſt be ſpeedy and eaſy, in either monſoon: and conſequently that, from this reſidence, this ſupreme power can effectually ſuperintend, enforce, and controul the meaſures of political, as well

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as of military, government, in this whole dominion. And, being the center of naval defence, it muſt be the only proper center of land defence: ſeeing the ſquadron will be ever at hand, to tranſport its land force, to any part of this dominion, that may be in danger.

And thus have I accompliſhed that which I propoſed: having planned the deſign of an intermediate power which, in ſuch a ſituation as hath been deſcribed, would eſtabliſh a completely regular ſyſtem of government, civil as well as military, in the whole preſent or future dominion of Britain in India: nay which would, in the hands of national government, render the taſk of governing this Indian dominion, as facil and eaſy, as it is to govern the ſmall Iſle of Man. And, the ſeat of its reſidence being at ſame time the center of naval and land defence, it would completely connect the, otherwiſe, divided ſtrength of the ſeveral governments: and would eſtabliſh the general defence, upon a footing ſo ſecure, that no enemy, either European or native, would dare to attack Britiſh dominion in India. It likewiſe appears that the drain of native

ſtrength, requiſite to maintain this whole dominion, would but little exceed that which Britain expends on maintaining the two barren fortreſſes, of Gibraltar and St. Philips's. Whilſt no part of the pecuniary charge, of either eſtabliſhing or afterwards ſupporting this ſyſtem of government, nor yet of the land and even naval defence, would come out of the treaſury of Britain; but would all be defrayed by the dependent dominion.

I have farther demonſtrated the moral impoſſibility of governing and maintaining this Indian dominion, by means of the Company; upon any other terms, than theſe, of conſtituting her ſovereign at home as well as abroad; and of conferring, upon her Directors, the ſovereign execution of government in Britain, as well as in that dependent dominion.

And I have endeavoured to rouze and awake the nation, to ſome ſenſe of, and regard to, the intereſt ſhe holds in this Indian dominion; by a ſlight deſcriptive ſketch of the nature, and degree, of benefit received by her from it, for ſome years paſt. And, as the ſenſation received from fact and experience makes ever a ſtronger impreſ-

impreſſion on the mind, than that which is conveyed by ſpeculative argument, I ſhall here again apply to the experience of the public, on this topic; which cannot be too much inculcated, nor preſented in too many different points of view; at this truly critical juncture, when nothing leſs than the moſt ſpeedy application, of the moſt vigorous meaſures, can prevent the total loſs, of this moſt important object to Britain; either through the final ruin of the countries themſelves; or, otherwiſe, by the aſſault of enemies.

Britain feels a general failure of credit, not only in the Eaſt India Company, but in individuals: and this failure of credit ſhe can aſcribe to no other cauſe, than to ſome extraordinary defect of numerical circulation, or a deficiency of numerical ſpecie, ſufficient to ſupport the wonted credit of paper. How happens this want of numerical ſpecie to be ſo ſeverely felt, all of a ſudden; or from whence ſhould ſuch defect ariſe? Aſſuredly from a decreaſe of her wonted influx of numerical ſpecie; whilſt her drain of that ſpecie continues to be at leaſt the ſame as formerly. But what channel or ſource, of

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Britain's influx, hath been dried up ſo ſuddenly, as to create this ſurprizing failure of numerical circulation? We have ſhown it to originate in Indian dominion; which being, through miſgovernment, reduced to a ruinous ſtate, the conſequent wonderful decreaſe of revenue, hath obliged the Company, to abſorb and dry up that channel of Indian private fortunes; which, till within theſe two years, uſed to convey into Britain, by foreign Company's bills, &c. at leaſt 700,000 l. *per annum*, in numerical ſpecie, or what is equivalent. And as Britain hath, during the two years that this channel was dried up, been continuing that drain, which ſhe could barely ſupport, when aided by that private fortune influx, it is plain that, within theſe two years, ſhe muſt have diminiſhed the ſtanding ſtock of her numerical circulation, at leaſt, 1,400,000 l. And one year, more of only an equally decreaſed degree of influx, will diminiſh her circulating ſtock 2,100,000 l. and ſo on. But a total deprivation of the influx received, for ſome years paſt, from Indian dominion, will, annually, double the diminution of circulating ſtock.

And;

And, from this view, the nation may draw the following juſt inferences: firſt, the mighty value and importance, of this Indian dominion, to Britain; in point of financial aid; as well as in other weighty reſpects. Second, the mighty alteration of circumſtances, in theſe Indian countries, ſince the time they became ſubjected to the dominion of the Company; as alſo, the preſent ruinous ſtate of that dominion. And from theſe two inferences ſhe may deduce, that concluſion which hath been juſt mentioned, that nothing leſs than the moſt ſpeedy application of the moſt vigorous and effectual meaſures, can poſſibly ſave thoſe countries from final ruin; and Britain from conſequent bankruptcy, poverty, loſs of credit, of commerce, navigation, naval power, &c.

I have, in this haſty production, ſketched out the nature of the neceſſary meaſures; but the application of theſe meaſures depends entirely upon the nation's exerting her own attention. I am far from meaning to work upon the paſſions, I apply only to the reaſon and underſtanding of men; for had not reſpect to decorum, and to the dignity of government, reſtrained me, I might,

might, on this ſubject, have thrown out many things, that muſt have excited diſcontent and indignation. Nevertheleſs the importance and urgency of the caſe obliges me to add, (and, without this, all I have ſaid can avail nothing,) that unleſs the nation ſhall exert herſelf moſt vigorouſly in this her own deareſt concern, ſhe muſt not look for any ſuch effectual meaſures, as will ſuffice to prevent theſe diſaſters.

For the nation muſt conſider, that her preſent adminiſtration conſiſts of the very men who tranſacted, and (by their truly reverberating eccho) confirmed, to the Company, the ſecond * grant of the Dewanny: knowing that this Dewanny was nothing other than the ſovereignty of a

* We muſt make a wide difference betwixt the firſt and ſecond grants of this Dewanny, (as it is termed.) The firſt grant was made for only two years, at a time when the then miniſtry were in a great meaſure unacquainted with the nature of the thing which they granted: having been deceived by baſe art: nor did this miniſtry, in the courſe of their adminiſtration, exert any manner of miniſterial influence over the Directors. But far different were the lights, as well as the conduct of that miniſtry which, on the expiration of the firſt two years, renewed that grant for the long term of five years.

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mighty dominion, dependent upon the Crown, and Nation, of Britain: and, conſequently that, by ſubjecting the numerous inhabitants of thoſe countries to the dominion of a few merchants, incapable of adminiſtring any ſort of government, they were conſigning over to tyranny and anarchy, intolerable oppreſſion and ruin, many millions of men, who were, to all intents and purpoſes, ſubjects of Britain. And they are the men who, during the four years that elapſed ſince that grant, have furniſhed the force to ſupport this tyranny and anarchy: and, in ſpite of ——— ——————————enacting a farce, wherein the Directors were compelled to perform the ſame part in Europe, that the native Nabobs have exhibited in India. It cannot, therefore, be expected that they will, willingly, change their plan of conduct: ſeeing that, beſides their former motives, they have the additional one of obſtinacy; or ſhame of ſtanding ſelf-condemned, for paſt miſmanagement, ſhould they now alter their meaſures. It is rather to be ſuppoſed that they will continue the cloke of the Company; together with the Directorial farce: and that, to ſupport

the broken credit of the Company, (broken by colluſive management,) they will, through eccho, grant her a power, to force her paper upon the public, for its money. As alſo that, under the pretext of honouring the nation with ſome ſhare in the charge of this ſovereignty, (under the Company, but no ſhare in the profits,) they will gradually thruſt her ſhoulders under that whole load, which, as the Company muſt manage it, will ſoon become intolerable. And, by the aid of theſe freſh reinforcements, they will juggle it and bungle it, and bungle it and juggle it on, for one, or poſſibly two, years longer: and then Nation and Company will both tumble together, into the pit of bankruptcy, perdition, and deſpair.

But ſhall the nation, with eyes open, ſuffer the pilot to crowd ſtemlings on the rocks, which have already grazed the ſhip's bottom? No, we muſt about ſhip, and call another hand to the helm. Matters, it is to be hoped, are not yet paſt remedy; the channel is obvious; if the nation will but put to her hand. His Majeſty can have no real intereſt but what is common with that of his people: and, how-

however the views of the Crown may, in ſome caſes, differ a little from theſe of the people; in this particular caſe they muſt both exactly concur. He will, here, hearken to the voice of his people: and a little popular heat will force into adminiſtration ſomething of that patriotic ambition, fire, ſpirit, and enterprize, which alone can ſave this nation from dreadful impending misfortunes.

But if the nation, ſunk in the bed of ſlaviſh ſloth, inebriated with the tranſforming Circean cap, enervated and emaſculated by the lewd embraces of ſenſual pleaſure, ſhall ſlight and diſregard her own deareſt concerns: like the prodigal debauchee, who chides from him the faithful friend that attempts recalling him to ſober reflection; and implicitly confides in the management of a ſteward, who hath already waſted the better part of his fair patrimony: then let the nation, ſome two or three years hence, recollect, that ſhe was adviſed of her danger, by a haſty production, iſſued about the middle of January, 1773: though not thought of, until that moſt diſintereſted of all poſſible miniſters had, by way of remedying all evils,

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diſpatched *his Secret Committee* to the India Houſe: there to inſpect the Company's private oeconomy: a thing, with which neither law, juſtice, government, nor nation hath any thing to do; and which, unleſs in caſes of bankruptcy, is ſacred to the meaneſt individual. As if, from the Company's books of accounts, it was poſſible to diſcover the cauſe of abuſe in the government of thoſe Indian dominions: or, as if ſchemes of ſaving to the Company, one ſhilling *per* ton, freight of her cargoes: or, three pence *per* pound, in warehouſe room, would retrieve the, almoſt ruined, Intereſt of Britain in India.

FINIS.